HEIDEGGER'S AUTHENTICITY

BY

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of Martin Heidegger's understanding of the concept of authenticity, and how that understanding may have changed over time, via a careful investigation of Heidegger's written works, from *Being and Time* in the 1920s to works of the mid-1960s. This study has two goals. Narrowly, it argues that the key elements of Heidegger's account of authenticity do not change over the period under consideration—while the nature of his elaboration shifts dramatically, the key content stays the same. Broadly, since a fundamental change in the understanding of authenticity, especially how it relates to history and to human volition (referred to below as the active/passive dimension), is central in most interpretations that argue for a strong turn, or *Kehre*, in Heidegger's later works, this study provides substantial evidence that there was not nearly as dramatic a shift in Heidegger's views as many argue.

Chapter 1 introduces the issue by discussing Heidegger's understanding of authenticity in general, ways history and the active/passive dimension could relate to authenticity, the general outlines of strong interpretations in relation to these two issues, and what various interpreters who hold such interpretations argue. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 examine Heidegger's views on authenticity, history, and the active/passive dimension, in roughly the 1920s, mid to late-1930s, and 1940s-1960s, respectively. Chapter 5 concludes, discussing in broad terms why strong interpretations of the *Kehre* are tempting even if misguided, and sketching a reading of the *Kehre* better suggested by the views argued for in this study.

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Many have had a role in my reaching this point. My committee members, Arthur Melnick, Richard Schacht, Bob Wengert, and Melissa Orlie, were essential in the process of turning an incredibly broad and overreaching idea into a focused, acceptable dissertation. They tolerated my delays and long-standing lack of actual written material in the belief that the result would be worth their time. I hope their patience was sufficiently rewarded. In particular, I must thank the patience, the encouragement, and the brilliance of Art Melnick, who showed me how history of philosophy as a discipline could be done, and done well.

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CHAPTER 1

A PLURALITY OF HEIDEGGERS

In April of 1962, Martin Heidegger wrote a letter to Father William J. Richardson, an American scholar preparing to publish a study of Heidegger's work, to be titled "Heidegger: From Phenomenology to Thought." In the letter, Heidegger proposes to answer two questions that Father Richardson had sent him. The second of those questions, in Heidegger's words, "looks for information about the much discussed "reversal" [in my development]."[1]

When Heidegger goes on to address the question about the reversal, or *Kehre*[2], his method of response might be said to be typical Heidegger: he begins with a brief, apparently straightforward statement, and then goes on at great length to qualify it in subtle and difficult ways, to the point where it is unclear if he really meant what he originally said at all, or if all of the qualification is just an attempt to carefully back away from his own position. After noting that the *Kehre* had been underway in some form for at least a decade prior to 1947, he says that "The thinking of the [*Kehre*] *is* a change in my thought. But," he continues, "this change is not a consequence of altering the standpoint, much less of abandoning the fundamental issue, of *Being and Time*."[3] Rather, it is a sort of continuation of the work that was started there, and which was to continue through the unfinished third division of *Being and Time*, to be titled "Time and Being." The *Kehre* was already there in the earlier work, Heidegger says: "The reversal is in play within the matter itself,"[4] however that may be (as Heidegger does not proceed to explain what he means by that ambiguous sentence). For this reason, Heidegger suggests that Father

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[1] Richardson, William. *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought, Fourth Edition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003) viii.
[2] Now more often translated 'turn;' I will typically use the German term, including in quotations.
[3] *Through Phenomenology to Thought* xvi.
[4] *Through Phenomenology to Thought* xviii.

Richardson change the title of his work to its current title, "*Through* Phenomenology to

Thought," so that one does not get the sense that the earlier work was simply left behind. To

conclude the matter, Heidegger summarizes his position by borrowing Father Richardson's terms

"Heidegger I" and "Heidegger II," in a passage that has spawned speculation ever since:

> The distinction you make between Heidegger I and II is justified only on the condition that
> this is kept constantly in mind: only by way of what [Heidegger] I has thought does one gain
> access to what is to-be-thought by [Heidegger] II. But the thought of [Heidegger] I becomes
> possible only if it is contained in [Heidegger] II.[5]

"Meanwhile," Heidegger starts the next paragraph, "every formulation is open to

misunderstanding." Indeed.

What is Heidegger's *Kehre*? It is generally taken for granted, and appears to be

confirmed by Heidegger himself (he is, after all, the one who introduced the term '*Kehre*'), that

there was some significant change in the course of his work, a change that had definitely come

about by the mid to late 1930s. And when one looks at his works before, during, and after that

period, things are definitely drastically different, at least on the surface. The works of the 1920s

and early 1930s have, for the most part, the character of formal treatises; though their use of

language and their idea of what constitutes philosophical argument may be novel, they are still

recognizably philosophical treatises with recognizably philosophical subjects. In the late 1930s,

however, there seems to be a sudden and dramatic change; the structure of Heidegger's works

becomes unmoored, with a profusion of styles, subjects, and approaches that carries on

throughout this period. The so-called "be-ing-historical treatises" of the late 30s, *Contributions*

to Philosophy (from Enowning) and *Mindfulness*, read more like chunks of Nietzsche's *Nachlass*

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[5] *Through Phenomenology to Thought* xxii.

translated into Heideggerian than formal philosophical work. Heidegger spends more time tackling ancient Greek thought and 19th century German poetry than Descartes, Kant, or contemporary philosophy. By the end of Heidegger's life the new approach is less volatile, but maintains its focus on non-philosophical topics and its avoidance of standard philosophical method by any measure. Something has happened, sure enough. But what? Heidegger's explanation in the letter to Father Richardson hardly explains anything. Heidegger says there is a *Kehre*, but that it is not an alternation of either the standpoint or the fundamental concerns of is previous work. What is the change, then? If such a change was already at work in *Being and Time*, was there any sign of it? If the change was to be carried out in "Time and Being," why wasn't it just published there? Was *Being and Time* insufficient? Was there some other concern? What, ultimately, is the relationship between Heidegger I and Heidegger II?

To these questions, interpreters have offered an impressive variety of answers, differing on what leads to the *Kehre*, when the *Kehre* starts, even how many *Kehres* there are. However, many, perhaps most, of the best-known answers center on a specific cluster of assumptions about Heidegger's work and development. These assumptions lead to a view of Heidegger's *Kehre* as marking a substantial shift in both the form and content of his thought (what I will call a 'strong *Kehre*' thesis, following Lee Braver) from *Being and Time*-era work to the 'Later Heidegger' of the 1930s on. In particular, these interpretations usually include (but are not limited to) two important shifts in Heidegger's views: first, how human beings relate to, appropriate, and work within the confines of their socio-historical situation, whether as individualists asserting their own values or respondents receiving all values and meanings from history; second, the manner in which human beings must engage with their circumstances, whether as active participants and

Nietzschean-style 'value creators' or as passive, open recipients of world-historical movements and events beyond their power.

In what follows, I will approach the issue of Heidegger's *Kehre* and the standard interpretations of it by way of a close interpretive investigation of one of the most important concepts in Heidegger's works: authenticity. In so doing, I will be working towards two aims simultaneously. Narrowly speaking I will provide a detailed description of Heidegger's concept of authenticity, both as it shows up in *Being and Time* and later in what appear to be its correlates, under terms such as 'mindfulness' and '*Gelassenheit*,' in Heidegger's later works. At the same time I will be working towards a broader aim, that of arguing for a new understanding of Heidegger's *Kehre*. Authenticity touches both on the issue of how individuals relate to socio-historical circumstances or factors for Heidegger, and on the issue of activism (sometimes referred to in the literature as voluntarism[6]) versus passivism with regard to pursuing one's possibilities. By understanding the ways in which authenticity, a central element of Heidegger's thought and of the *Kehre*, changes or doesn't change in the course of his writings, we will be better placed to understand the nature of the *Kehre* more generally. It is my contention that, at least when it comes to authenticity and probably more broadly, the *Kehre* is not nearly as strong as most interpreters think. To say that there is no change of any sort would be absurd; the change in style and approach is beyond question. But to say that there is a change in content as well is a thesis that requires further support. My contention is that such support isn't there; in fact, close readings of essential texts in Heidegger's corpus will reveal that the basic picture stays almost (though not entirely) untouched. As style changes, the substance stays the same.

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[6] 'Voluntarism' is a stronger term, and typically used to describe the strongest form of activism considered in this study. Since I will be considering more than that form alone, the broader term is desirable, as it encompasses all of the variants of the view and what they share. These variants are explained in more depth later in this chapter and in Chapter Two.

Which is not to say that there are no significant content changes whatsoever from the late 1920s on. Though that may be the case, and though it is my suspicion that it is at least likely, I do not argue for that here. The sheer work required for such a wide-ranging discussion of Heidegger's views, which he expounded in over one hundred volumes of lectures, addresses, and written works, would be a monumental task. Thus the issue, for example, of whether Dasein has a 'hard essence' in *Being and Time*, but no such essence in the later works, will not be touched (I briefly discuss below why not). And in terms of the exact nature of the *Kehre* itself, little can be given here besides a bare sketch in the Conclusion to this study, and in hints throughout. This study, for the sake of precision and detail, is a narrowly focused one; it gestures at larger issues surrounding the *Kehre*, but for the most part will not engage them, besides indirectly. Perhaps such an approach is not terribly exciting, but in maintaining such a narrow focus, it is hoped that this study will help keep the discussion focused on precision, clarity, and accuracy. Granted, Heidegger was not always clear in his own work. Even granted, as I believe, that there may have been justifiable reasons embedded within Heidegger's views themselves that would recommend his particular approach. But that does not mean that Heidegger scholarship should cease pursuing clarity to the extent that it can be realized.

The broad conclusions of the study are as follows. First, authenticity in *Being and Time* has a much greater connection to socio-historical factors than is typically acknowledged; in fact, they are *central* to it. Authentic Dasein is not a lone individual, struggling to free itself from the grip of history; it is historical all the way through, and Dasein's authentic stance, which is resolute with regard to a socio-historically determined set of possibilities called "the Situation," can never go beyond that.

Second, though there is in fact a form of activism in *Being and Time*, it is extremely limited, the activism of maintaining an authentic resolute stance against a tendency to become inauthentic. There is nothing like an existentialist-style asserting of one's free possibilities, or even a freedom to recognize or fail to recognize what one's possibilities are; these things do not arise on account of Dasein's choice. Dasein can only choose to persist in them, once revealed, or not.

Third, although for the most part Heidegger drops the language of authenticity and inauthenticity in his later work, most of the actual content of these concepts carries over to his later work in various forms, right on through to his interview with *Der Spiegel*, given in 1966. Heidegger does drop authenticity' and the related terminology of *Being and Time*, but virtually the entire account of inauthenticity, authenticity, and the transition from one to the other, are preserved as they were found in *Being and Time*. This is true both for the account of history's relationship to authenticity and that of activity and passivity.

Fourth, the previous point implies that, although the actual account of history is greatly expanded in the later work, and the tone of Heidegger's language takes on a much more passivist aspect, that is not because these elements arise from a new, radically different place in Heidegger's thought. In the case of history, the expanded account in the later works is just that: expanded, grown in both scope and depth beyond the terse discussion of authentic historicality found late in *Being and Time*. This does not equate to a great change in the actual relationship between authenticity and history. Authenticity, as noted above, was always historical; what happens after *Being and Time* is that Heidegger shifts towards a strong emphasis on the historical aspect of it in general, and on how it (and inauthenticity) manifests in the current historical epoch in particular. History does take center stage in the later work. However, I contend that history

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was always there to begin with, having largely the same role throughout; now it is simply under a direct spotlight. Likewise for the aspect of passivity; although it is now front and center, that is not because Dasein was an independent active chooser before. The 'activity of resistance' found in *Being and Time*'s account of resoluteness persists in the later works, and the passivism found in the latter is passivity of the same nature as in *Being and Time*. In Heidegger's terms, Dasein's openness to the History of Being is resolute grasping of the historical Situation, and holding oneself open to Being against the pull of technology is holding oneself open to Being against the pull of *das Man*.

Before conclusions can be argued for, however, the ground must be cleared. First, the two purported changes that constitute the *Kehre* with regard to authenticity must be better explained, particularly in terms of the role they play in the secondary literature.

1.1 THE RUGGED INDIVIDUAL AND THE WORLD-HISTORICAL MAN

It is frequently said of Heidegger's later works, and taken to be one of the clearest signs of the *Kehre*, that man[7] is replaced by history. But to say 'man is replaced by history' is ambiguous; what is role does man play in Heidegger's early work, what history, and in what way is on the former replaced by the latter?

There are two ways in which this claim about the individual-history relation, which forms one typical part of the strong *Kehre* thesis, has been understood. Since the two are frequently,

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[7] When it comes to using the terms 'man' [*Mensch*] and 'Dasein,' I will typically use 'Dasein' when referring specifically to *Being and Time*, and 'man' when discussing later works. I will alsouse 'man' when talking about humanity and human beings outside of specific textual references, since the general topic is what common language would refer to as 'man,' 'humanity,' or 'mankind,' and the latter terms make for awkward and not always helpful elocutions. It should be kept in mind throughout that both 'Dasein' and 'man' refer, *for the most part*, to the same thing. Times when this is not the case will be discussed as they appear. (Side note: when using third-personal pronouns, I will usually use 'he,' 'his,' and so on to keep in agreement with the typical translation of the gender neutral '*Mensch*' as 'man.')

perhaps almost always, conflated, and as I will only be focusing on one of them, it is important to distinguish them. The first, which I will call the 'ethical' version for reasons to be explained shortly, begins by saying that in Heidegger's early work, particularly in *Being and Time*, the individual is the starting point, initiator, and sustainer of action when it comes to pursuing possibilities. Possibilities, broadly speaking, are undertakings as a type of activity, what one can be in the sense of maintaining oneself as x through action—the activity involved in, say, being a philosopher, being the leader of a people, and being a good father are examples of possibilities in this sense. They are what you can do, insofar as you can undertake in doing them.[8] And in *Being and Time*, it is the individual that decides what possibilities are available to be pursued. History, insofar as it has any role at all in *Being and Time*, is taken in the strong *Kehre* interpretation as a negative influence, one that attempts to prevent the individual from acting on his possibilities. This view of how Heidegger presents the relationship between the individual and history is then taken to be reversed in the later work. There, the story goes, Heidegger's emphasis totally shifts to the unembodied, impersonal flow of history and its events as the focal point out of which our possibilities appear and changes in them occur; the way the world is grasped and what possibilities can be pursued in light of that grasp, or in other words what the individual ought to do and be, are determined not by individuals but by *history itself*, or rather by Being itself as it manifests in various ways through the course of history. In the early work, it is individual persons who determine the course of history; in the later work, history determines the course of individual persons, and this reversal is taken as one key aspect of the *Kehre*.

The 'ethical' version of the thesis should be distinguished from a very different version of the same claim, which I call the 'ontological' version. The ontological version says that in *Being*

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[8] If it is only undertaking the pursuit of x as a possible way to be that makes one x, and not, say, a predicate being true of one, can one can therefore be anything one pursues? In part, this is the question behind the individual-history relation: what, if anything, limits what one can be? Is only merely what one aims to be?

and Time and the works of that period, Dasein is a special sort of being, one whose fundamental essence is constant and unchanging throughout history; wherever and whenever it is, Dasein is always the exact same type of thing, with the exact same nature. In the later work, according to this interpretation, man loses his status as a special being with an unchanging nature; instead, he is said to have an essence that changes over the course of history. Literally, the Dasein that existed in ancient Greece was a different thing, with a different existential-ontological constitution, than Dasein today in the West. In short, whereas in Heidegger's early work man has an ahistorical essence, in the later work man's essence is completely determined historically, and changes through history. This second version of the thesis, then, is a claim about man's nature, whereas the first version is about what determines man's possibilities. The ontological version of the thesis, since it is not about authenticity per se, is not discussed here; the focus will be on the ethical variant.

Although there is variation among interpreters with regard to exactly how one should split Heidegger's work, the ethical claim about the individual-history relation, as with most claims about the *Kehre*, usually has two basic parts, corresponding to *Being and Time* and the later work. (Generally speaking, 'the later work' refers to everything written from the mid-1930s on. Note that, following the outline below, my investigation will not follow this twofold division. Instead, Heidegger's work will be split into three rough periods. The reason is provided below, where I explain the organization of this study in more detail. Regardless, most versions of the *Kehre*, and the ones that I am adopting to in particular, adopt some form of the division between "Heidegger I" and "Heidegger II," as Richardson puts it.[9]) In the case of the relationship between

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[9] See the "Conclusion" to *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*. As mentioned, not all interpreters subscribe to this two-part division; some, such as Schürmann, subscribe to a three-part *Kehre* by including Heidegger's earliest, pre-*Being and Time* work as a first part, and others say that there is a more gradual progression over time, with different aspects of the *Kehre* emerging at different moments. Remaining constant in these

individuals and history, the supposed issue of contention between the earlier and later Heidegger is in what man should be aiming to achieve. How can man realize his true possibilities? What does man have to do, where do his goals come from, and what provides the impetus to pursue them? According to this part of the strong *Kehre* reading, Heidegger in *Being and Time* and in the later work offers two directly opposing paths down which man is directed in order to discover what possibilities he can and should pursue. There is no obvious name for this particular version of the thesis; due to the emphasis on the possibility of choice and on where man *ought* to turn in order to discover his possibilities, I will settle, when a label is used at all, for calling it the *ethical* version. This name is not meant to imply that there is a Heideggerian ethics, nor even that there is anything normative in Heidegger's writings on this topic. (Heidegger, for his part, says explicitly that his discussions are not normative, though many interpreters doubt his sincerity at such moments: see, for one example of such warnings, *Being and Time* 211.[10])

To take a second pass, the ethical version of the strong *Kehre* thesis with regard to the individual-history relation says that, whereas *Being and Time* presents a very individualistic portrait of authenticity, pitting authentic individuals with their own unique, independent possibilities against a faceless and distorting society, Heidegger's later work places the content of man's possibilities is under the purview and control of history, and in fact makes acceptance of one's *historically determined* possibilities the ultimate goal of what, in the later writings, corresponds to authenticity. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger says that authentic Dasein is defined as "something of its own;"[11] starting from there, supporters of the ethical strong *Kehre* thesis say

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interpretations, however, is the idea of a substantial change some time after the publication of *Being and Time*, such that, by the late 1930s at the very latest, Heidegger's work is significantly different from what one finds in *Being and Time*. This is all that is meant above by the 'two parts' of the *Kehre* thesis.
[10] Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd, 1962) (Page numbers refer to English pagination in the Macquarrie and Robinson volume.)
[11] *Being and Time* 68.

that, in some important way, the possibilities that Dasein pursues are determined by Dasein

itself, independently of history and of outside circumstances more generally. Heidegger presents

authentic Dasein, on this reading, as a lone individual, one capable of transcending socio-

historical influences on what it chooses to pursue, including history, tradition, culture, the media,

and upbringing, among other things. To be "something of its own" means that authentic Dasein

is not someone or something else's. In particular, authentic Dasein is not the slave of societal

pressures, represented infamously by what Heidegger calls *das Man*, typically translated as 'the

'they,'' along with *das Man*'s distorting way of understanding the world, 'publicness.' Authentic

Dasein is thereby opposed to inauthentic, public Dasein, which is what Dasein is when

submitting to the control of a not-oneself, the 'they-self' or *Manselbst*. Authentic Dasein chooses

its own possibilities and acts on them, shutting out the voice of the *Manselbst* and with it the

public understanding of the world; thus, this interpretation appears to make natural sense of

Heidegger's claim that "Dasein is authentically itself *only to the extent that*, as concernful Being-

alongside and solicitous Being-with, *it projects itself upon its ownmost potentiality-for-Being*

rather than upon the possibility of the [Manselbst]."[12] This passage, and many others, support the

view that *Being and Time* presents an individualistic picture of Dasein; when Dasein is not

authentic, not choosing its own possibilities, it is because Dasein is lost in the inauthentic social

world of the *Manselbst*.

Compare the apparent individualism of *Being and Time* to what appears in Heidegger's

later work. In the late 1930s, Heidegger writes that "right from the beginning, the history of man

and the possibility of machination as the possibility of the groundlessness of the clearing are

decided in τέχνη [*techne*]."[13] In sum, the ethical thesis tells us, man's having fallen under the

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[12] *Being and Time* 308. (Italics in quotations are Heidegger's unless otherwise noted.)
[13] Heidegger, Martin. *Mindfulness*, trans. Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary (New York: Continuum, 2006) 115.

sway of a calculative, simplifying, dehumanizing way of thinking (machination) that shuts out all

other possibilities is not the result of individual persons forfeiting their choices to society; rather,

man's falling under the sway of this form of thinking was decided millennia ago, with the

emergence of the ancient Greek concept of τέχνη and its subsequent evolution. As a result of

historical events, the current age is the age of technology, a step in the history of be-ing[14], with

there being no chance for an individual to break free, either of the current age or of the history

that led to this age. In fact, man is completely left out of the realm of choice and decision-making

with regards to his possibilities, it seems: "History is the trace left in the clearing of be-ing by the

decisions on differentiating be-ing from "beings"—decisions that are enowned [*erignen*] by be-

ing."[15] It is the *Ereignis* (a term sometimes translated as 'enowning,' but which might be

translated more naturally as 'event,' 'appropriation,' or 'event of appropriation') of be-ing as it,

be-ing in general, differentiates itself from particular beings in different ways through the course

of history—as becoming, as thought, and finally as value—that determines what possibilities are

available in each historical epoch. Using passages like these, many argue that for the later

Heidegger it is the decisions of be-ing, not of a person, that determine what our age is like and

therefore what possibilities can be pursued; human history itself is just the history of

appropriations by or events of be-ing. Given that fact, (the equivalent of) authentic man must

grasp and accept the historically determined nature of his existence, so that his possibilities can

be recognized: "Be-ing itself en-owns [*er-eignen*, appropriates] thinking unto the history of be-

ing, unto this: be-ing is *en-owning* [*Er-eignen*]. In this way, thinking becomes be-ing-historical

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[14] *Se-in*. 'Being' (*Sein*) – sometimes capitalized by translators, sometimes not, sometimes used by Heidegger in one
sense, sometimes in another, sometimes with the word split ('*Se-in*') as it is here, sometimes purposely misspelled
('Beyng,' '*Seyn*') or crossed out ('B̶e̶i̶n̶g̶,' *S̶e̶i̶n̶*). The Herculean task of providing a straightforward translation
policy for this word, hard enough to deal with in the German, I will avoid in lieu of taking the common route: as a
rule, when the term is simply *Sein* I will use 'Being,' and I will generally use the translations just provided in the
other cases. Since the focus of this study is not Being itself, there is little need to delve into all the technicalities that
translation of the term introduces.
[15] *Mindfulness* 146.

thinking."[16] Translation: Be-ing is the event of appropriating thinking into history, and it

appropriates man's (authentic) thinking into its own (that is, be-ing's) history (that is, its own

series of appropriations which constitute history); thus, man's authentic way of thinking is

thinking that allows itself to be taken up into the history of be-ing ("be-ing-historical thinking"),

rather than trying to stand against it. This apparent reversal from individual to history as the

theatre of decision-making and source of possibilities continues, the ethical thesis holds, through

the rest of Heidegger's later work. Thus Heidegger says, in "The Question Concerning

Technology," that

> The coming to presence of technology threatens revealing, threatens it with the possibility
> that all revealing will be consumed in ordering and that everything will present itself only in
> the unconcealedness of standing-reserve. Human activity can never directly counter this
> danger. Human achievement alone can never banish it. But human reflection can ponder the
> fact that all saving power must be of a higher essence than what is endangered, though at the
> same time kindred to it.[17]

People cannot overcome the danger of technology, of what was established in Western history

with the advent of τέχνη more than two thousand years ago. If there is to be any overcoming at

all, it must come from a "saving power" that lies hidden in the essence of technology itself, as

another move in be-ing's history. Towards the end of his life, in the 1966 interview with *Der

Spiegel*, Heidegger straightforwardly answers the question, "You do not number yourself among

those who could show a way, if people would only listen to them?" with "No."[18] He elaborates:

"It is not a matter simply of waiting until something occurs to man within the next 300 years, but

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[16] *Mindfulness* 185.

[17] Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1977) 33-34.

[18] Heidegger, Martin. "Only a God Can Save Us: The *Der Spiegel* Interview," in *Philosophical and Political Writings*, ed. Manfred Staasen (New York: Continuum, 2003) 41.

. . . of thinking from the standpoint of the fundamental traits of the present age."[19] Man must think through the current age, the current moment in history, and even then man cannot on his own take the steps towards being authentic, being shown a way. Rather, unlike *Being and Time*, the aim is now to engage explicitly and fully with history, to prepare for history's next move rather than plot one's own.

The ethical thesis about the individual-history relation and its two interpretive prongs, that *Being and Time* has an ahistorical conception of authenticity and that this conception is totally reversed in the later work, has many adopters in the secondary literature, as a thesis about the *Kehre* generally and, via its two prongs, as a free-standing interpretation of either *Being and Time* or the later work. Somewhat complicating an overview of the secondary literature is the fact that this view is adopted in both explicit and implicit ways. Explicit, when it is directly claimed that *Being and Time* offers an individualist account of authenticity and that the later work rejects the individualism of *Being and Time*. Implicitly, when the accounts of history in general and authentic historicity in *Being and Time* are left out or disregarded in discussions of authenticity, while the subsequent disappearance of 'authenticity' as a central term, and increasing emphasis on history in the later texts, are taken for granted as indicating a shift from authenticity as an individualistic concept. Making matters worse is that the same interpretation can include both explicit and implicit elements. Still, a consistent picture emerges through the varied interpretations offered in the last few decades, so that a distinct collection of views can be singled out. But first, a note: since I agree with every interpreter I know of that Heidegger's later work is indeed centered on history, greater attention will be paid to what is said about *Being and Time* with regards to the relationship between the individual and history.

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[19] "Only a God Can Save Us" 42.

One of the first to offer variants of the current arguments for *Being and Time*'s

individualism, variants still found today, is Michael Zimmerman. Zimmerman says of *Being and*

Time that it presents a "voluntaristic-individualistic interpretation of authenticity,"[20] where the

aim of authentic Dasein is to make its own free choices apart from society. Even though

Zimmerman allows that history is supposed to play some sort of role in *Being and Time*, it fails

on account of what he calls subjectivistic assumptions in *Being and Time*, which ultimately leave

history under the sway of the choices of Dasein: "The subjectivity of *Being and Time* can also be

seen clearly in its failure to show that history is *not* merely the unfolding of Dasein's

possibilities, but is the working out of the history of Being."[21] Why does the discussion of history

not meet this purpose? Perhaps Heidegger's arguments were simply insufficient? Zimmerman

says something much stronger; he explains that, as far as he can tell, the account of history has

no clear real purpose, no direct connection to the rest of *Being and Time*: "It seems as if the

entire analysis of Dasein's "historicality" was only "tacked on" to the end of *Being and Time* and

seems not to have played a vital role in the articulation of the leading idea of the work itself."[22]

The discussion of authentic historicity, he continues, "has failed to show that history is not

merely the working out of Dasein's own possibilities, but is the history of Being itself."[23] If one

assumes that the entire account of historicality, including authentic historicality, has at best the

status of an add-on to *Being and Time*, one that contributes nothing to the arguments and

concepts from earlier in the book, then it's not surprising that one would arrive at an

individualistic account of authenticity, particularly when one thinks of the negative language

used to describe *das Man* and the public understanding of the world in *Being and Time*.

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[20] Zimmerman, Michael. *Eclipse of the Self: The Development of Heidegger's Concept of Authenticity* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981) 199.
[21] Zimmerman, Michael. "The Foundering of *Being and Time*," in *Philosophy Today* 19 (Summer 1975) 104.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.

An implicit example comes in Frederick Olafson's account of the *Kehre*. Olafson thinks that there is a tension in *Being and Time* between the plurality of Dasein's possibilities, which are derived from individual Daseins, and the singularity of Being. This tension arises because the world of Dasein's possibilities is "a space of possibilities and of possibilities that were coordinate with the *Selbstheit* – the "selfness" – of Dasein, and being as such therefore had to be understood in the closest possible connection with the projects of individual Dasein."[24] One might think that Heidegger's discussion of history in *Being and Time* has some bearing on how Dasein's projects are determined, and that that might allow for meanings in the world that are not simply dependent on Dasein's 'selfness.' Indeed, Olafson seems to allow for such a possibility when he says that "it does not seem to me that this would be an insuperable difficulty for a deeply conceived theory of *Mitsein* [Being-with, in the sense of being with other Daseins],"[25] of how Dasein relates to others besides itself. Yet that is all Olafson says on the matter. He says that "the elements of such a theory" of the *Mitsein* are in Heidegger's writings of that period, but that they "were not developed in this direction."[26] Heidegger's discussion of authentic history, as will be seen in Chapter 2 of this study, includes 'co-historizing' with other Daseins and embracing one's 'heritage.'. But Olafson gives no indication that the account of historicity in *Being and Time* might be of any relevance here; indeed, the discussion of history does not appear *at all* in his discussion, an odd omission when the topic is the *Kehre*.

Most interpretations similarly tend to place great weight on on the supposed individualism of *Being and Time*, and its great difference from the later work is taken for granted. Beyond general discussions of subjectivism and individualism, the locus of the

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[24] Olafson, Frederick. "The Unity of Heidegger's Thought," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 109.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Olafson 108.

argument is often placed on anxiety as something that totally severs Dasein from the world, therefore from socio-historical factors, altogether, leaving nothing but the individual self and its correspondingly individual possibilities for Dasein to choose from. Hubert Dreyfus is an example. Dreyfus allows, contra interpreters such as Zimmerman, that the role of *das Man* in Dasein's life is not merely a negative, distorting force, but something that "makes a coherent referential whole, shared for-the-sake-of-whichs, and thus, ultimately, significance and intelligibility possible."[27] Dreyfus, to his credit, does not take it for granted that, in *Being and Time*, socio-historical factors are merely restraints on the individual. However, granting that, and even granting that Heidegger has something to say on the subject of authentic history, he finds that "It is hard . . . to reconcile Heidegger's talk of the heritage and choosing superior possibilities with his account of anxiety."[28] This difficulty appears because, as Dreyfus reads anxiety in *Being and Time*, for anxious Dasein nothing has any meaning anymore. Dasein discovers that the world of meanings and possibilities it had taken for granted "has no essential relation to it."[29] Dreyfus strengthens his language in an appendix to *Being in the World* co-authored with Jane Rubin: there, he says that "all differentiations are revealed by anxiety to be totally indifferent, and so all equally meaningless."[30] That being the case, why should Dasein's culture, tradition, or heritage matter to it, either? It cannot; all becomes equally insignificant. Dreyfus thinks that the only possibility for authenticity Heidegger can find for Dasein in such extreme circumstances is in what Dreyfus calls 'marginal practices,'[31] out-of-date, basically uncool or outmoded practices that, in virtue of their relative insignificance to the broader society,

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[27] Dreyfus, Hubert. *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's* Being and Time, *Division I* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991) 161.
[28] Dreyfus 331.
[29] Dreyfus 180.
[30] Dreyfus 331.
[31] Not that Heidegger says this. Nowhere in any text does Heidegger discuss such practices or anything like them; where Dreyfus derives this idea from, such that he can impute it to Heidegger, remains to me a mystery.

have escaped the society's levelling effects. But that does not resolve the problem of *all*
possibilities of *any* kind being rendered meaningless by anxiety. Faced with this irresolvable
tension, Dreyfus says that "Later Heidegger . . . gives up his existential account of anxiety, and
of falling as a motivated cover-up of Dasein's essential nullity and unsettledness,"[32] moving
instead into the study of the epochs of Occidental history.

Michel Haar takes a similar position to that of Dreyfus. In *Heidegger and the Essence of
Man*, he allows that "Resolute *Dasein* [where resoluteness is a necessary part of being authentic]
does not withdraw from the world to float above it."[33] His discussion of anxiety, unlike that of
Dreyfus, pushes towards a more complex view; he allows that, in anxiety, "the floating and
melting of significations described as omnipresent remains *entirely relative*, limited to the
everyday familiarity that is shattered."[34] Does that mean that Dasein, even when in the throes of
anxiety, still has a connection to history? Haar does not give a detailed explanation, except to say
that anxiety is limited to the everyday because, in *Being and Time*, "there is no *anxiety in respect
of being*."[35] Haar compares the anxiety of *Being and Time* with what he finds in the 1929 lecture
"What is Metaphysics?" where "the link between anxiety and the self-manifestation of being is
substituted for the linking of anxiety with extreme, individual enabling."[36] But how is anxiety in
Being and Time linked to self-enabling? Given that, according to Haar, not everything is left
meaningless in anxiety, where does history and all that isn't left meaningless fit in? How does
history relate to self-enabling in anxiety, and does it place any limits on self-enabling? Haar
doesn't address these questions.

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[32] Dreyfus 336.
[33] Haar, Michel. *Heidegger and the Essence of Man*, trans. William McNeill (Albany: State University of New York
Press, 1993) 28.
[34] Haar 50.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Haar 51. This form of anxiety, as Haar understands it, relates more directly to the active/passive dimension of
Kehre interpretations. As such, it will receive more detailed treatment below.

Most recently, Lee Braver argues that *Being and Time*'s account of authenticity, and in particular the individualizing role of anxiety, keeps Heidegger from successfully maintaining the anti-realist position that there is no human essence, something Braver thinks Heidegger aims to achieve. To this end Braver cites "What is Metaphysics?"[37] to argue that anxiety leaves us, as Dasein, "Drained of content[. S]ince during these times our roles have no meaning and do not involve us, we have nothing but the formal structure of our existence or pure Dasein to cling to."[38] That pure, formal, structure, Braver thinks, subsists on its own, independently of historical factors, opening Heidegger's account to inconsistency. The result is that Heidegger's "ideal of authenticity as willed self-coincidence is perhaps the most conventional aspect of *Being and Time* and constitutes a regression"[39] from the anti-realism that Braver sees Heidegger as attempting to support throughout his career, an anti-realism that is finally reached via dropping anxiety as revelatory of a pure, ahistorical subject and, with that out of the way, taking man to be totally absorbed in, and structurally defined by, history. Unlike *Being and Time*, in the later work "history now permeates everything, and this removes any possibility of stable, unchanging reality, including a true self."[40] Though they differ on what exactly is implied, Dreyfus, Haar, and Braver all agree that in authenticity, a way of being that is always anxious, the socio-historical world loses all relation to Dasein. That being the case, authenticity must be something other than a relation to Dasein's historical world.

An additional view that some of these interpreters share is that, for Heidegger, authenticity and anxiety are opposed to inauthentic public understanding and to *das Man*, whose

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[37] And does so in the same vein as *Being and Time*, assuming that it does not represent a significant change from that work. Haar, as just seen, disagrees, but Haar is unusual in that respect. See footnote 45.

[38] Braver, Lee. *A Thing of this World: A History of Continental Anti-Realism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007) 220.

[39] Braver 217.

[40] Braver 9.

Manselbst is a corruption of Dasein's possibilities. For these interpreters, *das Man*'s role, and

with it socio-historical world more broadly, is as a force of distortion; when considered in

relation to Heidegger's views on authentic history, this is then typically presented as a tension for

Heidegger's use of history, one resolved in the later work by dropping *das Man* and the

authenticity/inauthenticity distinction. For this reason, Braver says that whereas *Being and Time*

holds the promise of a conception of the self "as completely defined by societal structures,"[41] one

that gives top billing to socio-historical factors, Heidegger fails to live up to his own promise in

the book. This is because of authenticity. According to Braver, when Heidegger describes

authenticity as a form of self-constancy, "The obvious presupposition of Heidegger's argument

is that there is a way that we really are, a way that gets covered up and disguised by our fallen

average everyday understanding."[42] This self, Braver thinks, is the hidden subject left behind

after all else is stripped away; there is no room for socio-historical factors to have a defining role

in Dasein's constitution outside of *das Man*, a problem that leads to inconsistency when

Heidegger tries to make a role for authentic history in *Being and Time*.[43]

For Dreyfus, who accepts, as seen above, that history has a positive and important role to

play in Heidegger's account of authenticity, this positive role is in tension with the public as a

force of distortion and untruth. He thinks that Heidegger is caught between the Diltheyan view

that any understanding of the world can only occur in a backdrop of history and culture, and a

Kierkegaardian suspicion of *hoi polloi*. As a result, "Heidegger does not distinguish these two

issues but jumps back and forth between them, sometimes even in the same paragraph,"[44] leading

to a great deal of confusion in *Being and Time*'s view of history. This confusion, according to

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[41] Braver 212.
[42] Braver 217.
[43] Braver 226.
[44] Dreyfus 144.

Dreyfus, is resolved in the later work by the eliminating the idea that Dasein flees its anxiety into anything like *das Man*; that is, by basically removing *das Man* from the account.

Haar thinks in largely the same way that the relationship between authenticity and inauthenticity becomes less significant after *Being and Time*.[45] History is no longer associated with *das Man* and distortion; "the importance of the distinction between authentic and inauthentic, originary and derivative, becomes attenuated; Dasein moves towards *neutrality*."[46]

Beyond particular claims, there is a consistent general approach to the relationship between the individual and history in Heidegger that most of the above interpreters share . They place the brunt of their interpretive weight on *Being and Time*, describing the later work either as a reaction against *Being and Time* or as an attempt to carry out the goals that it failed to achieve. *Being and Time* itself is taken to be individualistic, and the main support for the individualist thesis comes from the account of authenticity. It is argued that in *Being and Time*, anxious, authentic Dasein is cut off from the world, whereas in the later work Dasein is immersed in its historical epoch; possibilities no longer emerge from Dasein's own self, but from the particular historical epoch itself. As a result, a tension appears in *Being and Time* between history, represented primarily by *das Man*, and the authentic, anxious individual; the idea of a role for history apart from the *Manselbst*, and for a genuine connection between authenticity and history, is either not countenanced, disregarded, or considered an inconsistency on Heidegger's part, one later resolved in favor of history and against the authenticity/inauthenticity distinction.

Accordingly, when discussing the individual and history, with regards to *Being and Time* I will give primary attention to: the status of *das Man* and its relation to socio-historical factors more broadly; the way in which Dasein becomes authentic, with special attention to anxiety,

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[45] In this case, as early as the 1927 lecture course *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, given shortly after the publication of *Being and Time*. Haar's chronology of the *Kehre* is, generally speaking, difficult to parse.
[46] Haar 40.

resoluteness, and how the process of becoming authentic affects Dasein's understanding of and relation to its possibilities; and the account of authentic historicity late in *Being and Time*. Correspondingly, for later periods the discussion will focus on: how technology relates to man and how that compares to the account of *das Man* and inauthenticity; what happens to the elements that were formerly included in the process of authenticity, such as anxiety, decision, and resoluteness; and how the account of history compares in content and structure to the role of history, in particular authentic historicity, in *Being and Time*.

1.2 THE EXISTENTIALIST AND THE MYSTIC

Thus far, the discussion of authenticity has focused on the content of authentic decisions, specifically on the source of those possibilities towards which one can take an authentic stance: do authentic possibilities come purely from oneself, or is their content determined independently of the individual by broader socio-historical factors? Strong *Kehre* readings of authenticity are rarely limited to content, however; they typically also argue for a shift in the *form* of authenticity, which is to say, the way in which authentic choosing occurs and is carried out. Apart from what one's authentic possibilities are and where they come from, what sort of activity (or inactivity) does being authentic involve? What does one *do* when authentic? Step forward and take command of one's destiny, so to speak? Be open and accepting of one's circumstances, passively understanding and accepting rather than fighting for them? These two alternatives offer a first pass at defining what will be referred to as 'activism' and 'passivism,' and they represent another central issue in understanding authenticity. In short, does being authentic mean that one is actively asserting, taking hold of, and advancing towards one's possibilities, or is authenticity

more of a passive understanding and acknowledgement of one's possibilities? Or is there

something in between these two?

The active-passive relation is closely related to, but not the same as, the individual-

history relation, so it is important to note how they can diverge. This is importantly partly

because the two are frequently run together, as when Zimmerman calls *Being and Time*'s version

of authenticity a "voluntaristic-individualistic" one, noted above. It seems fairly natural to think

that, if possibilities come from the individual, it must be up to the individual to actively posit and

pursue those possibilities; on the other hand, if they come fully from history, then individuals

must simply accept them as they are, having no power to determine whether or how those

possibilities will be realized. But such a connection is not necessary. For instance, one can

believe that one's possibilities are fully determined by history, but also that the possibility of

falling away from them must be forcefully resisted, and that these possibilities are resolved upon

only through one's own initiative. One must, the thought goes, seize one's historical destiny, or

the destiny of one's people, and realize its potential.[47] From the other direction, one may think

that the possibilities one has are determined solely by oneself as an individual, while also

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[47] When put in these terms, one could see a potential link between such a 'historical activism' in Heidegger, if it is there, and the Nazism of which he was undeniably a part. The Nazi question, as one might call it, will not be discussed at length. However, this much can be said, anticipating my overall view: If, as I will argue in the course of this study, Heidegger thought from the beginning that authentic possibilities are determined by history, and if he also accepted a qualified sort of activism in the sense of holding fast to one's destiny in the face of a temptation to inauthenticity, one can see how he could be drawn to an ambitious, reactionary, anti-liberal and anti-cosmopolitan German nationalist movement such as Nazism. This does not imply, however, that historical activism has any necessary connection to such a movement. Historical activism, and with it the belief that one's possibilities are shaped by history, does not require nationalism (nations can change, be born, and be destroyed as a part of history, after all); racial and anti-Semitic theories have no necessary link to historical activism; and one could make a case that Nazism was itself inauthentic in Heidegger's sense. To this last point: to think, for instance, that the book which introduced the concept of *das Man* was at the same time a proto-Nazi work, requiring unconditional obedience to nationalist authorities who proclaim national greatness, an obedience that forgoes ever asking whether they truly represent a people's historical possibilities, requires a rather incongruous reading of *Being and Time*. If, as I will argue, the later works, including those of the 1930s, share basically the same viewpoint as that of *Being and Time*, then those works were not fundamentally proto-Nazi works, either. Which is far from saying that the concepts in *Being and Time* could not be read in such a way, including by Heidegger himself. This latter point may show that Heidegger was disingenuous, hypocritical, and perhaps a deplorable human being; but that may be because he failed to live up to the standard of authenticity, rather than because authenticity itself required the course of action he pursued.

thinking that the way to pursue those choices is to let them unfold naturally, so to speak. From this perspective, actively pursuing possibilities may distort them, leading to a mistaken focus on pleasure, success, greatness, or accomplishment rather than the actual unfolding of what is most true to one; one becomes selfish, lonely, and a caricature of oneself. It is important, therefore, to separate the form of authentic action from the content of authentic choice; to accomplish this, the discussion of activism and passivism will be treated separately from that of the individual-history relation. For similar reasons, one must also be careful to separate the question of activism from that of *who* acts; it could be an individual, a group, a nation, or mankind that is active or passive. So when it is asked whether 'people' pursue 'their own' possibilities actively or passively, this must not be read in a way that sneaks individualism in through the backdoor or takes it to show that individualism must be part of the picture; referring to 'people' in this way is more for convenience than anything else.

More precisely, the activist version of authenticity can be said to hold that authentic individuals or groups pursue their possibilities *on their own initiative*—regardless of where possibilities come from, given that they exist it is up to the people in question to set about actualizing those possibilities. If they do not take it on themselves to do so, their possibilities will not be realized in any way; possibilities don't become actual through any other means. This can be understood in a few ways. These ways will be explained in more detail when they appear again in Chapter 2, but an initial discussion helps to make activism in general clearer. Say that an authentic possibility for me is to become a philosopher. On the activist reading, authentically becoming a philosopher means asserting and pushing for the realization of my possibility. One way in which that would be the case is if it were up to me to determine what my own possibilities are. Perhaps those around me tell me that becoming a medical doctor is the way to

go, and that a degree in philosophy is at best a qualification for becoming a barista. In that case I have to, on my initiative, take being a philosopher as a real possibility for me, as the thing that has to be pursued; I have to choose it as my possibility, and in so doing make it mine. This is activism with regards to *possibility creation*. Another somewhat weaker form of activism appears if, having recognized that a possibility is my own, it is up to me whether I take it seriously. In the above example, say that it is not up to me whether becoming a philosopher is a possibility of mine. Perhaps, though, I am tempted to take the easier route and become a well-paid and respected, but miserable and unfulfilled doctor. Authenticity, on this reading, requires admitting to myself that philosophy is the best possibility for me to pursue, against the temptation to take on another possibility as my own—granted that I know it is a possibility of mine, do I choose to pursue it? This claim is not about possibility creation, but *possibility acknowledgement*. Finally, activism could exist, in a still weaker sense, in the form of persisting in the pursuit of one's possibilities in the face of pressure and resistance. Perhaps, having acknowledged that philosophy is what I should pursue, my family threatens to disown me if I continue studying it (not an absurd possibility if, say, I am coming from a fundamentalist background). Perhaps my professors tell me I'm not writing on a topic that will get me published in top journals, and so I should change my field. Becoming a philosopher means overcoming these pressures and holding firm in the pursuit of being a philosopher. This claim is about *pursuit of possibilities*.

Common in all three readings is the idea that becoming authentic requires taking action to overcome something that keeps one from being authentic, be it anxiety, ignorance, temptation, or something else; this is where inauthenticity plays its role. Inauthenticity as erring in discovering or creating one's possibilities, as keeping oneself from consciously acknowledging them, or as

submitting to outside pressure against pursuing them, must be fought in order to be authentic. Being authentic requires taking action, in this view, because there are strong forces (of one or more of the sorts in the example above) resisting authenticity. To not take action means lingering in inauthenticity, in some way choosing not to pursue one's possibilities, so action is a requirement of authenticity. The activist reading of authenticity, then, holds that becoming authentic requires taking some sort of initiative in affirming one's possibilities, in response to something, such as anxiety, ignorance, temptation, or outside pressure, that keeps authenticity from being one's state. In short, authenticity must be pursued.

In a passivist version of authenticity, by contrast, authenticity requires openness in some manner, and for the active-passive distinction to be a substantive one, that openness must be opposed to the assertive stance definitive of the activist reading. One might ask, though, whether becoming authentic in a passivist manner makes sense. If authenticity is something that, so to speak, just happens to one, with one being the passive recipient of authentic possibilities (or not), being authentic (or not) appears to be little more than a fact about one's state, and as a result not particularly interesting. Some people are authentic, some not, and that is simply the way it is. But this misses the nature of the distinction. The difference between the activist and passivist readings is *not* whether authenticity requires the person or group to take some sort of stance, versus just sitting and waiting for authenticity to happen—both activism and passivism require taking a stance, and in this sense require at least some very minimal act. The difference is in what kind of stance is involved. Whereas activism requires taking the initiative in pursuing a possibility, passivism does not involve asserting possibilities, but rather allowing them to emerge of their own accord, so to speak naturally. The easiest way to understand this[48], and one frequently used in the context of Heidegger's later writings, is in terms of mysticism. Mysticism,

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[48] Though not the most accurate—see Chapter 4, where I argue that Heidegger is not a mystic.

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in Buddhist, Christian, and other forms, is usually not a total lack of activity. Mystic meditation, for example, can take years of training and focused concentration to perfect, the result being a carefully cultivated stance towards the world. In a way, it is a sort of sustained action, but the action does not involve assertion or pursuing a goal. The action involves the refusal of assertion, and in its place allows a situation, a feeling, or a thought (or nothing at all) to manifest itself in its own way, naturally and unforced. Passivism is passive insofar as it does not call for assertion or actively pursuing possibilities, but rather allows possibilities to emerge on their own.

Since the passivist reading ties authenticity to openness *as opposed to* assertion, assertion actually becomes the main ground of inauthenticity. Again, the analogy to mysticism is informative. Buddhism's Four Noble Truths, for instance, locate the source of human suffering in attachment to the material world and its pursuits. To achieve the elimination of suffering, one must detach oneself from those pursuits (possibilities). Such detachment doesn't involve the assertion of new and different possibilities, but rather pulling away from possibilities previously taken for granted, recognizing them as insufficient for human happiness. Such liberation from the sources of suffering takes time and practice, but it is not activist in the sense of taking command of what one should pursue—rather, it is the process of allowing that struggle to fall away and become insignificant. To use the example from before: if my possibility is to become a philosopher, the danger to realizing that possibility, according to the passivist reading, is not inaction on my part but giving in to the rush of concerns and interests posed by the everyday world. The dangers to realizing one's possibilities can be (though they of course don't need to be) similar to, even the same as, those posed in the activist reading: ideas about what life paths are best ("Philosophy isn't for me—I should try to become a doctor, which is the thing that important people in our world do."), ideas of what professions are appropriate for one

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("Philosophy is what I do best and like most, but is that really more important than my financial and public success?"), views of what constitutes success in a profession such as philosophy ("I care about working on medieval aesthetics, but it's hard to get published in that area; maybe I should work on something more popular."). What changes is that these factors are opposed to authenticity because they lead one to abandon one's true possibilities in the charge for some supposedly better goal. The drive for success, or happiness, or power, or comfort leads to absorption in inauthentic life, and inauthenticity promotes assertion because constantly charging forward prevents genuine self-awareness. Assertion, thus activism, is the threat to overcome.

As with the individual-history relation, the strong *Kehre* thesis makes two basic claims with regard to activism and passivism, one about *Being and Time* and one about the later work taken as a whole. In short, the first is that *Being and Time* is an activist work, according to which authenticity requires that people assert their possibilities against strong resistance. The second is that Heidegger's later work is mystical, where 'mystical' means a deeply passivist position.

In *Being and Time*, according to strong *Kehre* reading, becoming authentic requires a process of self-assertion and self-initiated liberation from the temptations of inauthentic understanding. (Again, one must recall that despite the language, and despite the fact that the secondary literature usually ties the two together, activism and individualism can be separated, as can passivity and historicism.) In its normal, everyday way of living in the world, Dasein is under the dominion of inauthentic understanding. But this is not simply because Dasein is naturally that way; the world itself tempts Dasein away from confronting its own possibilities. "If Dasein itself," Heidegger says, "presents to itself the possibility of losing itself in [*das Man*] and falling into groundlessness, this tells us that Dasein prepares for itself a constant temptation

towards falling. Being-in-the-world is in itself *tempting* [*versucherich*]."[49] Instead of

acknowledging its true possibilities, and so confronting the anxiety that comes with its true

possibilities, Dasein has a tendency to become absorbed in the concerns and possibilities that the

world presents to it as valuable; if it didn't have this tendency, then inauthentic phenomena such

as idle talk and curiosity would have no hold on it, wouldn't be tempting. Into this situation

comes *das Man* offering an alternative set of possibilities, one that appears to be free of

unsettledness. *Das Man* comforts Dasein by hiding the truth from it, an act that Dasein is

complicit with. As a result,

> the particular Dasein in its everydayness is disburdened by [*das Man*]. Not only that; by thus
> disburdening it of its Being, [*das Man*] accommodates Dasein [*kommt . . . dem Dasein
> entgegen*] if Dasein has any tendency to take things easily and make them easy. And because
> [*das Man*] constantly accommodates the particular Dasein by disburdening it of its Being,
> [*das Man*] retains and enhances its stubborn dominion.[50]

Inauthenticity is a "tranquilizing"[51] way of existing towards which Dasein is tempted.

What of authenticity? How is it, according to the strong reading, activist? "*Authentic

existence . . . [is] a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon.*"[52] Authentic

existence is a particular way of seizing one's situation, one that starts with the call of conscience.

In brief, the call of conscience is what first breaks *das Man*'s grip on Dasein, by forcing Dasein

to recognize the anxiety it has about its possibilities. Conscience forces Dasein to recognize its

guilt, 'guilt' being a technical term meaning in part that Dasein "always stands in one possibility

or another: it constantly is *not* other possibilities, and it has waived these in its existentiell

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[49] *Being and Time* 221.
[50] *Being and Time* 165.
[51] *Being and Time* 222.
[52] *Being and Time* 224.

projection."[53] To say that Dasein is guilty is to say that Dasein has made a choice to pursue some possibility rather than others. The call of conscience, then, is the recognition that Dasein has made a choice, and is *always* making a choice; since Dasein's very nature includes always having possibilities, "*Dasein as such is guilty*, if our formally existential definition of "guilt" as "Being-the-basis of a nullity [in the sense of nullifying possibilities]" is indeed correct."[54] Dasein, then, as a being that constantly pursues possibilities, is always choosing to pursue or not to pursue possibilities, always choosing what possibilities it should pursue and so deciding, it seems, what its possibilities are (one way in which *Being and Time* appears activist). Dasein is shaken from the inauthentic avoidance of its anxiety by the call of conscience. Where does that call come from? Heidegger almost dismisses the question as unnecessary: "But is it at all necessary to keep raising explicitly the question of who does the calling . . . ? *In conscience Dasein calls itself.*"[55] Dasein must wake itself up via its conscience, must itself admit its anxiety (a second way that activism appears). Finally, when Dasein accepts the call of conscience it becomes free to recognize the real nature of its possibilities: "It has chosen itself."[56] In so choosing itself, it resolves itself upon its true, most essential possibilities: "*this reticent self-projection up on one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety*—we call "*resoluteness*"."[57] Dasein, once it has recognized its possibilities, must affirm them as its own, accept them, and continue to pursue them (a third way in which activism appears). In several ways, then, interpreters can argue that *Being and Time* has an activist conception of authenticity.

While *Being and Time* is activist, according to the strong *Kehre* reading, Heidegger's later works completely reverse the relationship between man and Being, and with it activism. In

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[53] *Being and Time* 331.
[54] Ibid.
[55] *Being and Time* 320.
[56] *Being and Time* 334.
[57] *Being and Time* 343.

Being and Time, the story goes, whether man achieves the state of authenticity is up to what man

decides to do; he must make the decision and pursue it. Not so for later Heidegger. For instance,

in the late 1930s Heidegger says of thinking, which comes to take the place of authenticity in this

period, "do "*we*" think being? Or is it so that be-ing "*is*" and en-owns [*er-eignen*] thinking

(thinking not as an arbitrary representing, but as en-thinking of being) and thereby en-owns

man's ownmost?"[58] In later Heidegger's philosophy, you don't think Being—Being thinks you!

This is meant quite seriously, at least in a sense. Heidegger's position at this juncture appears to

be that, far from man's assertion of his possibilities setting the ground for an authentic

relationship to the world, it is the state of be-ing itself, where be-ing is understood as something

transcending individuals and groups, that determines whether authentic possibilities are

available, whether man's ownmost (possibility) will be made manifest. Heidegger continues, in

an extremely dense passage typical of some of his later works:

> It is not we who "bring about" a rupture to be-ing; it is not we who interpret it "as" the
> ground. Rather, within the sway of be-ing as the refusal, there opens up first, *along with the*
> *ab-ground*, what is charged with ground as well as the 'nothing' that prevails through all
> nihilation and arises together with the prime-leap.[59]

Without our getting too far into the weeds, this passage suggests that it is not up to us whether

we correctly recognize be-ing (hence bringing about a rupture, as anxiety does for our normal

understanding of the world, which opens up the possibility of authenticity) as that which grounds

our understanding of the world. Instead, be-ing has a particular nature, that of refusal (refusal to

show us its true nature as that which makes all beings the beings they are; instead, we are

presented with particular beings, such as tables, chairs, and the like, not with be-ing) which

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[58] *Mindfulness* 110-1.
[59] *Mindfulness* 111.

opens up the nothing. The nothing is the gap between us and a perfectly orderly flow of events, what allows us to in a way separate ourselves from the normal flow of life and not be absorbed by it; basically, the nothing is what allows for our capacity for awareness of our world as historical possibilities, and is what thereby makes authentic decision possible. In the above passage, it is be-ing's refusal and hiding of itself that makes inauthenticity possible, not any particular flaw or tendency on our part. At the same time, be-ing is the source of the ab-ground, or lack of ground for ultimate significance and meaning of any sort, which leads to the anxiety that pierces through our inauthentic understanding and makes authenticity (or here, thinking) possible. More straightforwardly, Heidegger says in a later passage that "man can neither steer nor force the manner in which, at any given time, be-ing enowns its truth or holds it back in order to leave beings entirely to themselves and to their raving in machination,"[60] where machination here takes the place of inauthenticity. Sometimes be-ing giveth, and sometimes it taketh away. It is not up to us whether we are lost in the epoch of technology; the sway of be-ing, whether it veils or reveals itself, is up to its own unfolding. Whether we are authentic or not, then, appears to be up to be-ing itself, i.e. the impersonal flow of history, not up to us. In this way, the history-centered reading of the later work easily pairs with the passivist one, much like the individualist interpretation of *Being and Time* pairs easily with the activist one, which is part of why the two so often come together.

If everything is up to be-ing, on this reading of Heidegger, is there nothing people can do to become authentic (or its equivalents)? In the normal sense, which is to say some sort of striving for authenticity, the answer is a flat no. From the 1930s on, Heidegger associates assertion and the quest for power, including power over oneself, with the technological interpretation of the world that he thinks poses the greatest threat to our relationship to Being:

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[60] *Mindfulness* 209.

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machination expands its sway as coercive force. By securing power, this coercive force develops as the immediately eruptible and always transformable capability for subjugation . . . . To the extent that in the epoch of machination that is empowered to its unbounded coercive force man also grasps himself as animal (*living*-being), the only thing that remains for man himself . . . is the *appearance* of self-assertion vis a vis beings."[61]

The modern epoch is obsessed with overcoming, self-willing, and assertion of power over things. Man thinks himself powerful, but in fact it is the current age of technology that has power over man, determining how he understands the world and what sort of possibilities he pursues, a point expanded on later in "The Question Concerning Technology:" "Man can indeed conceive, fashion, and carry through this or that in one way or another. But man does not have control over unconcealment itself, in which at any given time the real shows itself or withdraws."[62] Man can try to take control of the world, but how he grasps it is something he is not in control of. There is no asserting one's destiny, as it is fully beyond one's power.

That being said, the question remains: what, if anything, can one do? Here Heidegger's language famously veers towards the poetic. "Wherever man opens his eyes and ears, unlocks his heart, and gives himself over to meditating and striving, shaping and working, entreating and thanking, he finds himself everywhere already brought into the unconcealed."[63] The word 'open' invariably comes up in discussions of the later Heidegger, and with good reason. 'Open' or 'openness' is the most effective word to describe what authenticity becomes focused on. Man's proper stance, given that self-assertion is a product of technological thinking, is to slow down, take a breath, and observe the world around. Man is always in a world full of meanings that come from beyond him, and the most important step to realizing that, the later Heidegger seems to think, is by drawing away from the modern rush and allowing the world itself to show itself as

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[61] *Mindfulness* 12-3.
[62] "The Question Concerning Technology" 18.
[63] "The Question Concerning Technology" 18-9.

it is, without trying to master it. True thinking, which means thinking that grasps the most basic, essential relation between man and the world (between Dasein and his possibilities) is about not willing at all: "thinking is something other than willing . . . . And that is why, in answer to your question as to what I really wanted from our meditation on the nature of thinking, I replied: I want non-willing."[64] Freedom from technology means, on the passivist reading, freedom from willing altogether, the freedom to grasp one's world as it reveals itself to be. This appears close to the Buddhist idea of nirvana, of release from suffering by releasement from attachments. Taking all of this together, one can anticipate what Heidegger would say when asked, in 1966, if anyone can do anything to stop the march of technology: "philosophy will not be able to effect an immediate transformation of the present condition of the world. This is not only true of philosophy, but of all merely human thought and endeavor. Only a god can save us."[65]

The strong *Kehre* interpretation of the active-passive dimension just provided appears to have a good explanation for the changing nature of Heidegger's written work after *Being and Time*, and like the individual-history dimension it has several interpreters supporting it in somewhat varied ways. As with the individual-history dimension, the interpretive weight here is often placed on the interpretation of *Being and Time*, with the *Kehre* then understood primarily as a response to it. The later work does receive a more developed discussion in the literature when it comes to its purported passivism, but as a thesis about Heidegger's work it is understood primarily as a reaction. When given briefly, the story is typically of a conversion from initiator of the existentialist movement to a quasi-mystic poet, as when Wrathall opens a chapter on "Death and Authenticity" in his introductory book on Heidegger by saying that "Heidegger's [*Being and Time*-era] philosophy stands squarely in the existential tradition in Western thought," where

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[64] M. Heidegger. *Discourse on Thinking*. Trans. J. Anderson and E. Freund (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers. 1966. 59.)
[65] *Philosophical and Political Writings* 38.

existentialists emphasize "human freedom," among other things.[66] Correspondingly, Blattner, in

his book on what he takes to be Heidegger's temporal idealism, takes time to mention, though

not defend, what he takes to be the later Heidegger's "radical, quasi-mystical position," a

position that he makes use of as a contrast to Heidegger's earlier views.[67]

There are also other, more deeply worked-out versions of the strong *Kehre* interpretation.

Again, one of the first and clearest contemporary versions is Zimmerman's. Zimmerman's

explanation of *Being and Time*, despite his use of the term 'voluntaristic-individualistic' to

describe the work, is more subtle than it appears. In discussing the call of conscience and its role

in *Being and Time*, he notes that the call of conscience, which first brings Dasein to recognize its

guilt and thus be open to becoming authentic, "can be controlled by no man."[68] Thus, Heidegger

does not think, according to Zimmerman, that we can come on our own to recognize what our

authentic possibilities are, much less assert our own goals to pursue. However, insofar as Dasein

> *resolves* to anticipate the call of conscience, i.e., insofar as owned existence is possible only
> because Dasein steels itself to face its own finitude, then owned Selfhood remains mired in
> the kind of subjectivity which Heidegger claims characterizes Western thinking. According
> to Heidegger, resolve and will lie on the side of the subject.[69]

In *Being and Time*, on Zimmerman's reading, Dasein must still will itself to acknowledge that its

possibilities are its own to take on, and take action in resisting inauthenticity and pressing forth

into them. This is reversed in the later work, however: "As the later Heidegger might say, Dasein

must let Being speak through Dasein – but it is Being itself which initiates the disclosing of

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[66] Wrathall, Mark. *How to Read Heidegger* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2006) 59-60.
[67] Blattner, William. *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 309.
[68] Zimmerman 103.
[69] Ibid.

Being through this speaking."[70] For authentic possibilities to be open in *Being and Time*, Dasein must make the choice to put aside its inauthentic concerns and to acknowledge the source of its anxiety; it must choose to let Being speak to it. In Heidegger's later works, on the other hand, Being determines if and when this happens. The later works correct the so-called 'subjectivity' of the earlier works by abandoning resoluteness and willing as elements of authenticity.

Haar similarly locates the crux of activism in how anxiety comes about. In *Being and Time*, according to Haar, anxiety appears "in *Dasein* alone as the index of its ownmost potentiality for being,"[71] without there being any role for Being itself, or anything beyond Dasein, to initiate the turn to anxiety. The onset of anxious awareness of the limits of one's possibilities, that one either can choose or fail to choose one's possibilities, is a personal event for each Dasein, whose arrival and significance ranges only over that Dasein's possibilities. Being itself more broadly has no role in the process; as noted previously when discussing Haar, for him "in *Being and Time* there is no *anxiety in respect of being*,"[72] but only in respect to Dasein's own possibilities. This formulation remains somewhat ambiguous—does this actually require that Dasein itself initiate the transition to anxious recognition of its possibilities?—but is made clearer when Haar specifically addresses the *Kehre*. The activism of *Being and Time*, Haar says, is directly reversed almost immediately after 1927, where "The nonhuman origin of nihilation (*Nichten*), the powerful trace of thrownness, overrides the assumption of self-enabling via death."[73] In 1929 nihilation is what initiates anxiety, not Dasein's self-enabling of itself through recognition of its inevitable death (which, in *Being and Time*, is taken as Dasein's 'ownmost' possibility). Dasein does not begin the path towards authenticity; nihilation, or "the

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[70] Zimmerman 104.
[71] Haar 50.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.

self manifestation of being is substituted for the linking of anxiety with extreme, individual enabling."[74] This transition is perhaps the central aspect of Heidegger's *Kehre*, as Haar describes it, where Dasein is replaced totally by Being as the locus of activity: "With the [*Kehre*], indeed, it seems that we are witnessing a total inversion of subjectivism, anthropocentrism, and the movement of self-possibilization. All freedom is made possible in the first place by being."[75]

Not all who accept an activist interpretation of *Being and Time*, or the strong *Kehre* interpretation more broadly, interpret *Being and Time*'s as activist in this way. While Zimmerman's and Haar's readings focus primarily on the second sense of activism discussed earlier, Olafon's reading focuses on the first, on who or what is the source of possibilities in the first place. In *Being and Time*, Olafson tells us, Dasein is a projective being—that is to say, it is always looking ahead to what it can become, projecting possibilities into the future that it chooses to pursue. Because of the "freedom in which such projects are generated, and the indefinitely extensive variety of content by which these are characterized,"[76] Heidegger was presented with the problem that the nature of Being, "as presence a space of possibilities and of possibilities that were coordinate with the *Selbstheit* – the "selfness" – of Dasein,"[77] became dependent entirely on what Dasein determines to do. It is Dasein, as a free and independent being, that decides what possibilities it will pursue. Being, as a result, is just the way the world manifests in light of Dasein's chosen possibilities; I see the world as a Western philosopher or a Hindu fundamentalist because of my choice. Everything depends on the initiative of Dasein, going as far as what Being itself could be. In his later works, Olafson continues, Heidegger "dealt with this difficulty by simply dropping the active and projective character of Dasein"

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[74] Haar 51.
[75] Haar 122-3.
[76] Olafson 109.
[77] Ibid.

altogether, moving to "the quietism of the later period."[78] This is an instance of the first form of

activism, where in *Being and Time* Dasein determines the very nature of its possibilities—of

what would be the possibility to follow. Authenticity in *Being and Time*, on this reading, is

Dasein asserting possibilities of its own choosing, not any that come from outside. In the later

work, however, the situation is reversed; it is Being, which Olafson interprets as presence, that

determines the ground of Dasein's existence, its possibilities, and not the other way around.

Braver also focuses on Dasein as a projective being. "The meaning of Being," says

Braver, "the goal of the entire book, was the temporality that human Dasein projects which

makes Being possible."[79] The very aim of *Being and Time*, Braver says, is to show that it is

Dasein which creates the space of possibilities in which it moves and acts, "similar to the way

Kant's transcendental subject projects time and space (Heidegger, *BT* 54– 55/31)."[80] Interpreting

Being and Time as a Kantian transcendental project, Braver places the failing of *Being and Time*,

and the reason it was left unfinished, in its inability to escape a realist notion of a transcendental

subject that constitutes the world, and thus constitutes Being, and thus constitutes the

possibilities that it pursues; Dasein determines what its world will be through its choice. Not so,

when it comes to the later work, which institutes

> a new, revised form of Passive Knower. The clearing or relation to beings is not created or
> instituted by us, as in the Kantian Paradigm; rather, it is "granted" or "sent" to us and we
> receive it. Later Heideggerian man is an exceedingly passive being. This is not the passivity
> of the empiricist soft-wax or blank-slate mind, since interpretation is always at work, but the
> controlling and inaugurating activity of the Kantian active knower is now rejected.[81]

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[78] Ibid.
[79] Braver 274.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Braver 275.

In the later work, while "interpretation is always at work" (though apparently not in a substantial sense, since the very same interpreter is "an exceedingly passive being"), Dasein no longer brings about the world as it is experienced in any way. The projection of possibilities which helps to shape a world is no longer the result of Dasein's activity, as in *Being and Time*; now it is sent to us and we receive it 'thankfully' as a 'gift' (to use two more of Heidegger's terms from his later work) from something beyond us.

As said before, many of these interpreters (virtually all of them, in fact) tend to tie activism in Heidegger to individualism, and passivism to historicism. One who offers a more complex picture is Dreyfus. The resolute stance that forms the core of *Being and Time*'s account of authenticity, according to Dreyfus, "is the openness that results from the acceptance of the breakdown of the ethical illusion of lucid total choice, and the realization that the self is impotent and empty. It is therefore misleading to call the change choosing to choose. Dasein does not choose at all."[82] This is a drastically different account from the ones given above, where choice is central, either at the level of choosing what will be a possibility, or of choosing to acknowledge what one's true possibilities really are. Resoluteness just means, on Dreyfus' account, recognizing that one has no power to decide what one will be (it is worth nothing that this discussion appears in an appendix comparing Heidegger and Kierkegaard, in part on the powerless of the subject to determine a way to live on her own). However, when one looks at why Dreyfus takes resoluteness to be this way, it is because he actually cites in the first place not *Being and Time*, but interpretations of *Being and Time* that Heidegger gives in *Introduction to Metaphysics* and "The Origin of the Work of Art," pieces from the mid-1930s, to make the point! Which is not to say that Dreyfus is wrong in doing so (in fact, he's quite right). But the very issue in contention is whether such a move is legitimate, whether Heidegger really can be trusted

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[82] Dreyfus 318.

when he claims that he is saying the same thing in *Being and Time* and after. With so many arguing against that thesis, it cannot be taken for granted, but must be defended.

As with the individualism-history relation, a common pattern clearly emerges in the strong *Kehre* reading here: *Being and Time* is an activist work because it has an activist account of authenticity, where Dasein in some important way chooses whether or not to become authentic. Whatever happens, it is up to Dasein to take action. In the later work, on the other hand, action is in a certain sense the enemy; insofar as there is any 'doing' at all, it is a ceasing of action, of willing, and in its place an opening of oneself to the receiving of Being. It is action, not inaction, which creates problems. The result is a complete reversal of the position in *Being and Time*. The way in which I will approach the topic is largely the same as for the individual-history relation. In Chapter 2, a detailed interpretation of authenticity in *Being and Time* will provide interpretive grounds for arguing about whether Heidegger was activist or passivist in that work. Corresponding to the three possible versions of activism (and corresponding forms of passivism) described above, the focus for *Being and Time* will be on where possibilities come from (a question that will be addressed partly in the discussion of history), on how anxiety comes about and whether Dasein initiates it, and whether Dasein must hold itself firm in an active sense in its pursuit of possibilities. In each of the later chapters, interpretations of major works will proceed by way of comparison with regard to the same three elements. The result will be both a clearer grasp of whether Heidegger was an activist and passivist, and of what sort of changes his understanding of this topic went through over his career.

1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF THIS STUDY

Since the discussion is about Heidegger's body of work as a whole and how authenticity is understood across that corpus, a wide range of his works will be under consideration. However, there is far too much to do anything like an exhaustive study, so much must, of necessity, be left out. For instance, I will leave out anything before *Being and Time*. Not because there is nothing of interest there, even when it comes to the discussion of authenticity. (After all, it would be strange to assume that authenticity emerged suddenly as Heidegger was writing *Being and Time*, like Athena from the head of Zeus.) However, since the focus is on authenticity once it has developed into the distinct form that one finds in *Being and Time*, it would add little to my purpose to discuss it here.

The first cross-section of Heidegger's work to be looked at is, of course, *Being and Time* itself, where authenticity is introduced and expounded on at length. Chapter 2 will focus almost exclusively on *Being and Time*, with a look at "What is Metaphysics?" as well. In the latter, anxiety is examined in a way that closely follows the account *Being and Time* in many respects while expanding upon the discussion. There will be no discussion there of works past "What is Metaphysics?" as they reach more uncertain interpretive territory. Thus, Chapter 2 can be thought of as covering authenticity pre-*Kehre*.

Chapter 3 will jump to the late 1930s. The early to mid-1930s is very important for grasping the actual historical progression of Heidegger's work itself, but this study does not aim to look at each individual development and introduction or modification of a term—the aim here is to examine several snapshots as they appear in significant works at a given time period, and to see how they relate to each other. And while the status of the 1930s remains murky—there is

much debate, noted above, as to when changes emblematic of the *Kehre* can be found in certain works—there is universal agreement that such changes have come about by the late 1930s, in particular with the be-ing-historical treatises. As such, Chapter 3 will focus primarily on *Mindfulness*, the second of those treatises, which is more developed and more legible than the earlier *Contributions*. There will also be some discussion of the 1935 lecture "The Origin of the Work of Art," which covers some similar themes in a very different form. Together, these cover a sort of transition period between *Being and Time* and what is typically considered the late Heidegger, who purportedly comes onto the scene in the 1940s.

Chapter 4 then moves on to that late Heidegger, covering a wide range of works from the early 1940s to the mid-1960s. Heidegger's writings of that time are diverse, and are mostly in the form of lectures or lecture courses, not long treatises such as *Being and Time* or *Mindfulness*. Thus, a single representative work cannot be chosen to lead the discussion, and this has some benefits, since a much wider range of years is being covered. Works under close consideration include the two Addenda to "What is Metaphysics?" and the "Letter on 'Humanism,'" all written in the 1940s, "The Question Concerning Technology," written in the late 1940s but revised in the 1950s, and the *Der Spiegel* interview, "Only a God Can Save Us," given in 1966. The discussion there will not be limited to those works; several others will appear when they have something distinct to contribute, such as 1962's "Time and Being." While a much wider range of years is being considered, and a much wider variety of works, there is little scholarly debate about the degree of difference between works of this period, and indeed they tend to be similar, tonally and otherwise, so that there is not much issue in treating them mostly together (though, of course, any significant differences, whether apparent or otherwise, will be discussed as they come up).

Finally, Chapter 5 will look back at the overall argument developed over the previous chapters, and take a speculative look at what possibilities for further study might be opened up as a result. I argue that any changes in Heidegger's conception of authenticity are not changes of content. But then how does one explain why things look so different? What is the *Kehre*, if not a new view? I conclude by offering a quick sketch of where the answer may lie.

In an ideal world, far more of Heidegger's works would be examined for this study. But an exhaustive study of Heidegger's body of work would be nearly as exhaustive as Heidegger's collected works themselves, and likely take decades rather than years to write; as a result, one can only take what are important works, either taken on their own or in virtue of their place in the secondary literature, and try to form as complete a picture from them as the circumstances allow. My hope is to have covered the major twists and turns in Heidegger's works in a way that can be judged at least satisfactory. Whether I have succeeded, only what follows can determine.

CHAPTER 2

AUTHENTICITY AND INAUTHENTICITY IN *BEING AND TIME*

Heidegger, of course, wrote many works before *Being and Time*, especially in the early and mid-1920s, and there is little doubt among commentators that there was a great deal of change over that period. However, when Heidegger appears to refer to a *Kehre*, most take the *Kehre* to have occurred between *Being and Time* and the works that came in the following decades. It is with *Being and Time* that we get the most complete statement of several aspects involved in the *Kehre*, and against which any discussion of the later work is compared. In particular, it is in *Being and Time* that authenticity (and, with it, inauthenticity) receives the extended, detailed analysis around which any discussion of authenticity in Heidegger revolves. As such, *Being and Time* itself, along with the well-known 1929 lecture "What is Metaphysics?" (which is in many ways complementary to *Being and Time*) will provide the starting point for discussing authenticity.

The examination of authenticity in *Being and Time* will consist of four parts. First will be an initial discussion of authenticity and inauthenticity, moving in the order that Heidegger sets it out in (from inauthenticity as a starting point, to authenticity). This discussion will attempt to paint a relatively neutral picture of authenticity and inauthenticity, and of what the relation between the two, along with how one transitions to the other, looks like. It will lay out the major terms, when they appear in the course of the text, and what role they seem to play, while attempting to avoid controversial interpretive leaps. From the basic picture I will take a brief look look at how the common view of authenticity as an individualistic (which for commentators typically means ahistorical, as opposed to historical) and activist (which is typically opposed to a

form of passivism) view emerges from this account. Having set out those two interpretations, I will address the first by turning to the discussion of authenticity in the later chapters of *Being and Time*, where a more nuanced picture emerges, one that attempts (without complete success, I will argue) to develop an account of authentic historicity. The account of authentic historicity, often ignored or discounted as in conflict with the initial account of authenticity, becomes comprehensible and even follows naturally when considered in light of certain concepts developed earlier in *Being and Time*, particularly Being-in-the-world with its central role in the account of Dasein. This picture will help to demonstrate that *Being and Time*'s account of authenticity is far more historical than often assumed—in fact, history has an *essential* role in the account of authenticity. This will be clear even though, I will argue, Heidegger's picture of authentic historicity is at certain points murky and incomplete. Finally, the discussion of authentic historicity in *Being and Time* will help to inform a less activist account of *Being and Time* than is generally supposed. Given the role of history in Dasein's existence, there cannot (*contra* Olafson) be a voluntaristic positing of one's life goals, as a strong activist reading of *Being and Time* supposes. Nor is it up to Dasein whether or not to acknowledge his fundamental anxiety; the call of conscience comes unbidden, and not as a result of Dasein's willing. Rather, Heidegger wants to strike a balance between an acceptance and acknowledgement of the irreducible role of history in Dasein's life, and the need for Dasein to actively grasp that history, along with the possibilities it opens, as being genuinely one's own, as opposed to the possibilities thrust upon Dasein by others. As a result, there is indeed an activism, but only one of persisting in the pursuit of one's authentic possibilities. Although the incomplete account of authentic historicity prevents a full story from being seen, that fact does not stop a clear picture from

emerging, one that is a far cry from authenticity as an existentialist-style taking charge of and creating one's fate.

2.1 THE BASICS: AN ACCOUNT OF INAUTHENTICITY, *DAS MAN*, AND ANXIETY

Before describing authenticity or inauthenticity, I will start with a brief discussion of the term 'authenticity' itself, and how the concept relates to Dasein. 'Authenticity' is a translation of the German term *Eigentlichkeit*, but the German term is more precisely translated as something like 'ownedness,' in the sense of possessing what is truly one's own, what truly belongs to one. If Dasein is authentic, it possesses what is truly its own, and for Heidegger what is truly Dasein's own is its self. In Heidegger's words, "only in so far as [Dasein] is essentially something which can be authentic—that is, something of its own—can it have lost itself and not yet won itself."[83] The self which can be lost (how exactly that happens will be explained below), and which must be found if Dasein is to be authentic, consists of Dasein's possibilities. "[P]ossibility as an *existentiale* [that is, as a constitutive element of Dasein's ontological constitution, as part of what Dasein is as long as it exists] is the primordial and ultimate positive way in which Dasein is characterized ontologically."[84] What Dasein *is*, what makes it Dasein, and thus what defines the content of the self that it can lose or gain, is the possibilities that it has and can pursue. Dasein *is* possibilities, meaning Dasein is the pursuing of given possible ways to be; Dasein is, in a sense, a form of activity, the pursuing of possibilities. By comparison, something like a rock lacks possibilities; though things can happen to a rock, such as it being broken, breaking is not a

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[83] *Being and Time* 68.
[84] *Being and Time* 183.

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possibility that the rock itself can actively pursue or fail to pursue. Dasein, however, so long as it exists, has possibilities that it can choose to pursue or not.

It is important to note that for Dasein, having possibilities does not mean that it is totally free to do anything at any time, that it lives in "the 'liberty of indifference' (*libertas indifferentiae*)."[85] Rather, whenever Dasein exists, it has a definite set of possibilities that are its own particular possibilities (much more about which will be said later). An individual Dasein, such as you or I, can pursue the possibilities that are its own, or not. Which of these it does determines whether it is authentic or inauthentic. On a first gloss, then, authenticity is a matter of Dasein recovering its *own* [*eigen*] specific possibilities, and *authentic* [*eigentlich*] Dasein is Dasein that has recovered its own possibilities.

As Heidegger frequently repeats in *Being and Time*, however, "proximally and for the most part" Dasein is not pursuing its own possibilities, and so is not authentic. As opposed to authentic Dasein, *inauthentic* [*uneigentlich*] Dasein is Dasein when it has lost its possibilities. What does this mean? In what sense can something lose its own possibilities? Heidegger describes inauthenticity as consisting of two parts: "fleeing *in the face of* [Dasein, i.e., Dasein's own possibilities] and forgetfulness *thereof*."[86] First I will look at forgetfulness, and then fleeing.

Dasein's forgetting of its possibilities is assisted by what Heidegger calls '*das Man*.'. Strictly translated, "*das Man*" means "the one,"[87] and *Man* "one," in the sense of, "*One* does not do that," or in German, "*Man* tut das nicht." (For instance: "One does not simply walk into Mordor.") To say that "one does not do that" is not referring to any particular Dasein's

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[85] Ibid.

[86] *Being and Time* 69.

[87] As has been the case up to this point, "*das Man*" and "*Manselbst*" will remain untranslated. Macquarrie and Robinson use 'the 'they',' which, while it accurately represents the fact that *das Man* is neither an individual nor a collective of individuals, misses the connotations in the German that come along with the English term "one" in the sense discussed above. Since both elements are important, so that using either "the they" or "the one" proves insufficient, I've decided to leave the term untranslated, with a note that both connotations must be kept in mind by the reader.

circumstances, but to Dasein *qua* part of a general, undifferentiated multitude: As a member of the group, the club, the class, the country, one simply does not do certain things; they are frowned upon, discouraged, nonsensical, a *faux pas* in decent society. But *das Man*'s roleis not solely prohibitive for Heidegger, and in fact its prohibitive role is not even the most important role it has; it also provides positive possibilities as to what each Dasein should do with its life, what it should pursue and how it should pursue it. For example: To become a great philosopher today, it is generally taken for granted that *one must* perform well at a good undergrad program, move on to a Leiter Top 10 grad school for a Ph.D (if one doesn't make it in, one must get a terminal Master's Degree at a good program and try again), publish at least one or two articles in high-ranked journals such as *Nous* or *The Journal of Philosophy* while working on the degree, and then get a tenure-track job at one of those same Top 10 schools. This understanding of what one must do to become a great philosopher does not account for, nor intends to account for, each Dasein's particular circumstances, its history or present situation; it only regards Dasein as a member of a group, namely the group of potential philosophers, and prescribes possibilities based upon that generality. Yet this common knowledge, so to speak, is taken as obvious and necessary to anyone who aims to succeed in the profession.

Further, *das Man* provides an explanation not only for how to achieve one's possibilities, but also for what possibilities are worth achieving in the first place (such as whether becoming a philosopher is the right path for people at all, and what sort of people it is right for). The term '*das Man*,' it must be kept in mind, is not meant to point to some particular being or entity that tells Dasein what to do, nor does it refer to the collected totality of persons; rather, it refers to the common, undifferentiated, impersonal (one might say superpersonal) understanding of what one's possibilities are, an understanding that comes about through shared social norms and is

experienced via the general public, the media, friends and family, one's upbringing, and so on. It

is this understanding on which Dasein relies for virtually all of its decisions.   As a result of its

pervasiveness, this common understanding of each Dasein's possibilities, called 'publicness' by

Heidegger, is said to

> proximally [control] every way in which the world and Dasein get interpreted, and it is
> always right . . . because it is insensitive to every difference of level and of genuineness and
> thus never gets to the 'heart of the matter' ["*auf die Sachen*"]. By publicness everything gets
> obscured, and what has thus been covered up gets passed off as something familiar and
> accessible to everyone.[88]

Das Man, i.e., the common, public way of understanding the world, controls Dasein's

possibilities because it offers what we call conventional wisdom about decisions, and presents

that wisdom as obvious and necessary. (To use the example from before: to hear someone say

that he or she intends to become a philosopher by meditating under a tree for seven years strikes

us as absurd; that is not what someone should do, we tend to think, in order to become a

philosopher.[89]) By offering its own set of obvious, "familiar and accessible to everyone"

possibilities, *Das Man* can thus control how the each Dasein's possibilities are interpreted. It can

maintain a wide degree of control not because it knows each Dasein's particular possibilities and

calibrates its claims accordingly, but because it completely ignores those particularities, instead

prescribing the same universally applicable possibilities to everyone, with the pressures of social

norms and expectations doing the rest of the work. Thus, although each Dasein may have its

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[88] *Being and Time* 165.

[89] One might say in response that such meditation is inappropriate for becoming an *academic* philosopher, which is
not the only type of philosopher there is. But considering this distinction reinforces the point: in the modern day,
becoming a philosopher and becoming an academic philosopher are largely treated as one and the same thing, and
an academic philosopher is what one is supposed to become if one wants to be a *real* philosopher. Someone today
might, for instance, think of a maker of prescription lenses who also writes on philosophical topics as an optometrist
who is also an *amateur* philosopher, but wouldn't expect such a person to be a Spinoza.

own particular possibilities, the influence of *das Man* obscures those, and as Dasein becomes absorbed in the subsequent tasks and goals provided for it, the universally applicable set of possibilities is taken to be obvious and beyond question. To live in this way, attempting to forget one's own possibilities under what Heidegger calls the "dictatorship of [*das Man*],"[90] is inauthenticity.

But why does Dasein accept *das Man*'s possibilities? Why be inauthentic? This is because of Dasein's tendency to flee its possibilities, a tendency that comes from the nature of possibilities. Because Dasein always has possibilities, Heidegger says, it always has some awareness of being responsible for what it does, which is just to say that Dasein is always choosing some possibility and by so doing excludes others—it chose A rather than B, thus it is responsible for choosing A. This awareness Heidegger refers to with the term "guilt" (*Schuld*); Dasein is guilty, whatever it does, because it has chosen something to the exclusion of something else.[91] Another implication of always having possibilities is that, since possibilities *qua* possibilities are not actualized or realized, the aim and direction of Dasein's life is always unsettled, subject to some sort of change. This can happen in two ways: Dasein can, at any time, pursue some other possibility (I could, at any and every moment, cease writing, leave the university, and try to join the circus), and Dasein's possibilities can change due to factors beyond its control (If, en route to a philosophy conference, my plane crashes on a desert island and I am never rescued, I will no longer be able to be a member of the professional philosophical community, no matter how many papers I present to rapt audiences of coconuts). Recognizing this responsibility and unsettledness, which comes from the fact that one is always choosing despite a lack of finality and even of control, is the core of what Heidegger calls anxiety (*Angst*),

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[90] *Being and Time* 164.
[91] *Being and Time* 327.

which "makes manifest in Dasein its *Being towards* its ownmost potentiality-for-Being—that is, its *Being-free for* the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself."[92] In other words, anxiety is Dasein's awareness of the unsettled nature of its own possibilities, awareness that it can at any time choose to pursue its own possibilities, whatever they may be and regardless of the possibilities *das Man* offers; anxiety recognizes that public possibilities are not its own and that they do not offer any final resolution to the question of what to do in one's life. Dasein, being always unsettled in this way since by definition it always has possibilities (hence, always in fact being anxious in some way), is always able to take charge of its own possibilities, even though doing so offers no certainty, no finality, and no settledness in its existence. That being the case, the certitude, reassurance, and simplicity of *das Man*'s possibilities provide a tempting way of avoiding one's anxiety.

As a recognition of the limits of Dasein's possibilities, anxiety includes recognition of one possibility in particular that Dasein always has so long as it is, "its ownmost potentiality-for-Being" that it can never avoid: death. Heidegger's summarizes death as something that is "one's ownmost, non-relational, and not to be outstripped."[93] That is to say, Dasein's death *qua* possibility (1) belongs to each individual Dasein as an individual Dasein, (2) it cannot be passed from oneself to another Dasein, and (3) it cannot be escaped by Dasein—it, along with taxes, is guaranteed, though never at any specific, certain moment. Besides being inevitable, death is indefinite—it could come at any time, without warning—and death functions as the outer bound of all of Dasein's possibilities, the point past which Dasein can have no more possibilities, and as the end of all of Dasein's current possibilities. In order to avoid confronting death and its role in each Dasein's life, *das Man* presents death as an uninteresting, universal, and ultimately trivial

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[92] *Being and Time* 232.
[93] *Being and Time* 295.

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fact: "death is understood [through *das Man*] as an indefinite something which, above all, must duly arrive from somewhere or other, but which is proximally *not yet present-at-hand* for oneself, and is therefore no threat."[94] Hundreds of people are reported dead on the news every day, thousands die from disease, war, and famine, but it is of no interest to most of us most of the time; it's just another day in the news. Death happens, and it happens so often as to be insignificant; one day I will die, too, but how is that any different? To face one's inevitable but uncertain (as to the exact time) death is uncomfortable, to say the least. There are times, nonetheless, when death takes on a more personal significance: for example, when someone we know dies, or when we ourselves have a close brush with death. At such times, the trivial fact of death may strike us in a new, personal, and disturbing way, as though we are becoming aware of it for the first time. But for the most part, by dismissing the personal aspect of death, as well as the unsettledness of life, *das Man* allows Dasein to avoid the acknowledgement of its own death, and so the true range of its possibilities, by fleeing to *das Man*'s understanding of the world.

In sum, inauthentic Dasein is characterized by fleeing its own possibilities, especially death, and trying to forget them by taking on *das Man*'s publicly available possibilities as its own. That in mind, authentic Dasein can now be described as the rejection of inauthenticity; in brief, authentic Dasein rejects the public possibilities of *das Man*, instead acknowledging and accepting its own possibilities, and with those the anxiety and guilt that it previously fled. In such a state Dasein is no longer absorbed in *das Man*'s understanding of the world. Being unsettled with regard to its former, inauthentic web of involvements and interests, Dasein is, Heidegger says in no uncertain terms, individualized: "Anxiety individualizes Dasein and thus

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[94] *Being and Time* 297.

discloses it as '*solus ipse*',"[95] free of *das Man*'s grip. The stance of authentic Dasein in this

situation towards its possibilities, wherein it acknowledges the certainty of its own death and

resists the *temptation* (Heidegger's term) of *das Man's* public possibilities, is called 'anticipatory

resoluteness.' Heidegger summarizes anticipatory resoluteness as bringing

> Dasein back to its ownmost [possibility]-for-Being-its-Self. When one has an understanding
> Being-towards-death—towards death as one's *ownmost* possibility—one's potentiality-for-
> Being becomes authentic and wholly transparent.
> The call of conscience passes over in its appeal all Dasein's 'worldly' prestige and
> potentialities. Relentlessly it individualizes Dasein down to its potentiality-for-Being-guilty,
> and exacts of it that it should be this potentiality authentically.[96]

The term 'conscience' refers to Dasein's implicit, constant awareness of having

possibilities (after all, Dasein exists only so long as it has possibilities—possibilities end only

with death), and hence of its unsettledness and guilt. Dasein, recall, never fully forgets its

possibilities, though they can get covered up to some degree in inauthenticity. The 'call of

conscience' refers to Dasein's call to itself to acknowledge its own possibilities, rather than those

offered to it by *das Man*, and to base its choices on the former. Rather than saying anything in

particular, the call is just the awareness, constituted by anxiety, that the world is unsettled (or as

Heidegger calls it, *unheimlich*, 'uncanny' in the M&R translation but more precisely translated

as 'not at home,' out of place). In short, what is calling is Dasein's anxious self, reminding itself

that things are not settled and not final: "the caller is Dasein, which, in its thrownness (in its

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[95] *Being and Time* 233. Here one can get a taste of why anxiety will turn out to be central to the individualist
interpretation. The full response to this interpretation of anxiety requires an explanation of what authentic Dasein is
supposed to be authentic with regards to, as well as a far more detailed discussion of what anxiety is and isn't, which
appears later in this chapter.
[96] *Being and Time* 354.

Being-already-in), is anxious about its potentiality-for-Being."[97] Resoluteness means bypassing, via anxiety, of *das Man*'s possibilities and accepting one's own possibilities, including death, instead. It is accepting one's self.

Since responding to the call of conscience requires that Dasein acknowledge its ownmost possibility, death, Heidegger also refer to authentic Dasein's state as 'Being-towards-death,' as opposed to *das Man*'s generic, dismissive understanding of death. In acknowledging death as its most personal possibility that cannot be abandoned or diluted, authentic Dasein is freed of *das Man*'s impersonal possibilities; it grasps its own possibilities as the particular Dasein that it is.

2.2 HEIDEGGER AS EXISTENTIALIST

Given the account of authenticity provided thus far, an account which hews closely to Heidegger's text and terminology and has not made any unusual interpretive leaps, one can make several arguments for reading authenticity as an individualistic, activist concept.

The first observes that the role of socio-historical factors in Heidegger's account appears to be entirely encompassed by *das Man*, which itself appears to exercise an exclusively distorting influence on Dasein. *Das Man*, Heidegger says, always covers up Dasein's own possibilities. This is true of *das Man* not because it is evil but because, by definition, *das Man* is simply the totality of social norms that tells Dasein *qua* generalized subject what possibilities it should or shouldn't pursue. It is exactly because of its universality and non-specificity, because it does not account for Dasein's true self, that *das Man's* possibilities can apply to everyone: it can do so only when it completely ignores any individualizing factors in individual Daseins. Terminologically, calling the *das Man*'s way of understanding 'publicness' ('publicness' is a

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[97] *Being and Time* 322.

fairly accurate translation of the term *die Offenetlichkeit*) closely ties *das Man* (and with it, inauthenticity) with the public sphere in general. Nor does Heidegger ever appear to distinguish *das Man* and socio-historical factors. On the side of authenticity, breaking free of Dasein appears to be a break from socio-historical influences more broadly; to break from inauthenticity is to break from publicness, from *das Man*.

From the identity of *das Man* and socio-historical factors an argument can be made that, if *das Man* is always a distorting influence on Dasein, which it appears to be, then so are socio-historical factors generally, since the two are the same; in that case, it is the aim of authenticity to reject such factors. There is still much that will be said on the subject of history in *Being and Time*, and most (though not all) commentators do recognize that history has an important role, as will be seen shortly. However, the argument just given can account for that; insofar as outside factors such as tradition and history might have any role, this is only because they come into tension, many commentators say, with the account of authenticity. Of *Being and Time*, then, Zimmerman thus says that "It seems as if the entire analysis of Dasein's "historicality" was only "tacked on" to the end of *Being and Time* and seems not to have played a vital role in the articulation of the leading idea of the work itself."[98] Over thirty years later, Braver says that although Heidegger takes great strides towards an "interpretation of the self as completely defined by societal structures," ultimately "Heidegger does not maintain this position in his early work,"[99] falling back towards an emphasis on the subject via the account of authenticity. Whether such a falling back occurs will be seen once we look more closely at the role of history.

Secondly, anxiety, which is an essential element of authenticity, appears to be explicitly individualizing. Anxiety, Heidegger says, causes a break between Dasein and *das Man*'s

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[98] "The Foundering of *Being and Time*" 105.
[99] Braver 212.

influence; at the same time, it appears to rob Dasein of its projects and concerns, its connections to a world shaped by history and society. This interpretation is reinforced, as Braver notes, by the 1929 lecture "What is Metaphysics?" in which Heidegger says of anxiety that "In the altogether unsettling experience of this hovering where there is nothing to hold on to, pure Da-sein is all that is still there."[100] At such times, Heidegger seems to be suggesting, the world itself and everything outside of Dasein's innermost self disappears from Dasein's experience. Anxiety, on this reading, causes an impassable rift between Dasein and the world, leaving the one without the other. If so, given that authenticity is always an anxious state, then it appears that authentic Dasein is always in an important way severed from the influence of the world, including history, society, and everything else that falls under *das Man*. In this light Harr, recall, opposes the works from 1929 on (including "What is Metaphysics," interestingly) to *Being and Time*'s "linking of anxiety with extreme, individual enabling."[101] According to Dreyfus, anxiety reveals that "the public world makes no intrinsic sense for it and would go on whether that particular Dasein existed or not,"[102] robbing the public world of any importance.

The individualistic reading of authenticity, in turn, frequently ties into the activist reading. Dasein, Heidegger says, typically tends to avoid confronting its own possibilities. *Das Man* provides possibilities that are comforting, allowing Dasein to avoid acknowledging its real possibilities. "The supposition of [*das Man*] that one is leading and sustaining a full and genuine 'life', brings Dasein a tranquillity."[103] *Das Man*'s interpretation of the world is "tempting,"[104] presumably tempting from the difficulties of authenticity, resolve, and anxiety. Most

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[100] Heidegger, Martin. "What is Metaphysics?" in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 89.
[101] Haar 51.
[102] Dreyfus 180.
[103] *Being and Time* 222.
[104] *Being and Time* 221.

importantly, Dasein is inauthentic most of the time. To avoid inauthenticity requires a resistance to Dasein's own tendencies; Dasein must refuse to accept the possibilities offered to it. Instead, it must be resolute towards its own possibilities: "In the light of the "for-the-sake-of-which" of one's *self-chosen* potentiality-for-Being, resolute Dasein frees itself for its world."[105] Dasein must take action, must free itself, and in this sense becoming authentic is a matter of voluntary choice; authenticity only comes about through Dasein's willing it so. This "extreme enabling," as it is described by Haar in the passage cited above, is then typically opposed to the later Heidegger, according to whom Dasein is, as Braver says, "an exceedingly passive being."[106] Being acts in the later Heidegger, whereas in the earlier Heidegger it is up to Dasein to assert itself. As Zimmerman summarizes his version of the activist reading,

> to the extent that it *resolves* to anticipate the call of conscience, i.e., insofar as owned existence is possible only because Dasein steels itself to face its own finitude, then owned Selfhood remains mired in the kind of subjectivity which Heidegger claims characterizes Western thinking. According to Heidegger, resolve and will lie on the side of the subject.[107]

Finally, both of these interpretations are supported by the terminology Heidegger uses to describe authenticity and inauthenticity in general. Heidegger's language comes across as heavily normative, describing the role of socio-historical factors with negative, passive terms and describing authenticity with positive, active terms. Societal norms are the voice of 'das Man,' the impersonal 'one,' through which 'fallen' Dasein 'flees' and 'forgets' its own possibilities. In order to recover authenticity, which means being freed from the "dictatorship of [*das Man*]," 'conscience' must 'call' Dasein to recognize "its own" possibilities, and Dasein should respond

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[105] *Being and Time* 344. (Emphasis mine)
[106] Braver 275.
[107] Zimmerman 103.

by acknowledging its 'guilt.' 'Authenticity,' or 'ownedness,' is Dasein taking hold of its guilt in

'resoluteness.' The very terminology itself appears to make plain that authentic Dasein should

break free of socio-historical factors on the quest to become a true, individual self. It is easy to

see how the existentialism found an early voice in *Being and Time*. And while Heidegger himself

says more than once that his interpretation of authenticity and inauthenticity "is far removed

from any moralizing critique of everyday Dasein,"[108] Braver can say with seeming justification

that "Although Heidegger denies that his analysis of Dasein contains any ethical prescriptions, it

is obvious that authenticity is some kind of ideal."[109] Even Charles Guignon, who strongly

opposes what he calls Zimmerman's activist reading of *Being and Time*, says that "Despite

Heidegger's insistence that his ontological findings have no evaluative import, the exhortative

tone of the account of authenticity is unmistakable."[110] Heidegger appears to be promoting a

view, one strongly opposed to any sort of conformism or acceptance of society as the source of

meanings. Even putting any moralizing aside, Heidegger was quoted above as saying explicitly

that anxiety and the call of conscience *individualize* Dasein. It is hard to see how authenticity

could be anything but individualistic, and an activist story of Dasein's recovery from

inauthenticity appears to closely follow. But how well does that story hold under scrutiny?

2.3 RESOLUTENESS, THE SITUATION, AND THE ROLE OF HISTORY

The explanation of authenticity thus far is in many ways the standard account of what

authenticity amounts to; however, Heidegger's discussion does not end with Being-towards-

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[108] *Being and Time* 211.
[109] Braver 216.
[110] Guignon, Charles. "Heidegger's 'Authenticity' Revisited," in *Heidegger Reexamined Volume 1: Dasein, Authenticity, and Death*. ed. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall (New York: Routledge, 2002) 191.

death and anticipatory resoluteness. Following the "hermeneutical spiral" method of *Being and Time*,[111] Heidegger's initial account of authenticity receives additional clarification and revision over the course of the book. And it is only in the final chapters, those frequently given less heed by interpreters, that Heidegger begins to develop his conception of Dasein's historicity and its relation to authenticity. Further, that development is not *ex nihilo*; there is much in the earlier parts of *Being and Time* that points to the development of history later on. Accordingly, this section will look first at Being-in-the-world and its role in the account of Dasein, a role that some take to be in conflict or tension with the account of authenticity. Then I will offer an interpretation that brings Being-in-the-world into step with authenticity, showing that the discussion of Dasein's authentic relation to history is not an afterthought, but Heidegger's fleshing out of authenticity in light of Dasein's constitution as Being-in-the-world. The supposed tension between history and authenticity only arises if one does not take proper measure of Being-in-the-world's central place in the account of Dasein.

I start by continuing the discussion of authenticity where it left off—resoluteness. Resoluteness, says Heidegger, isn't just a general attitude way to be, but always requires resolving upon some particular possibility that Dasein has.[112] The possibility that Dasein resolves upon is not one given to it by *das Man*. *Das Man*'s universalized possibilities, as has been said, cannot simultaneously apply to everyone while also accounting for all of the circumstances of each individual, and so they are never capable of being truly one's own. Authentic Dasein can therefore only resolve upon its own possibilities, which are, judging by what has been said, its own and no one else's. This is made clear to Dasein via the awareness of death, which forms the outermost limit of all of its possibilities (not to be outstripped), is always its own (ownmost), and

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[111] *Being and Time* §63.
[112] *Being and Time* 345.

cannot be passed off (non-relational). The resolute anticipation of death thus cuts Dasein off

from *das Man*, forcing it to face its now freely chosen possibilities (with the caveat that all

possibilities cease with death).

This story, however, is incomplete. For Heidegger also says, in seeming tension with

everything else, that "Resoluteness, as *authentic Being-one's-Self*, does not detach Dasein from

its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating "I"." [113] To explain why this

should be obvious, even though in "What is Metaphysics?" he says that "pure Da-sein is all that

is there," Heidegger continues: "And how should it [detach or isolate Dasein], when resoluteness

as authentic disclosedness, is *authentically* nothing else than *Being-in-the-world*?" To understand

resoluteness, and so authenticity, more fully requires looking at an element of Dasein's

existential constitution that arises much earlier in *Being and Time*, initially separated from talk of

authenticity: Being-in-the-world. Heidegger argues that a key part of Dasein's existential

constitution is that of having a circumspective involvement in a relational web of concerns,

interests, and projects, one not of its own making. Recall that Dasein is not just defined as a

being with possibilities. It is a being with a definite set of possibilities, such that having

possibilities doesn't amount to a "liberty of indifference;" Dasein is faced with possibilities that

are not arbitrary, and it is between those possibilities that it must choose. This involvement that

provides the ground for a Dasein's particular set of definite possibilities is what Heidegger refers

to as "Being-in-the-world," with the world as such roughly being the web of concerns, relations,

and projects. Being-in-the-world is so essential to understanding Dasein that, besides having

possibility be its most fundamental characterization, Dasein is at the same time "an entity whose

Being is defined as Being-in-the-world." [114]

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[113] *Being and Time* 344.
[114] *Being and Time* 116.

An example helps illustrate how Dasein as possibility is connected to Dasein as Being-in-the-world. I, like any other Dasein, have possibilities. But I don't have the same possibilities as every other Dasein out there. A Dasein growing up impoverished in Sudan has a very restricted set of possibilities compared to myself, a graduate student at a large US university. Becoming a professional philosopher is possible for me, in no small part because my life circumstances allow me to study philosophy, work with philosophers, and so on. A Dasein growing up in Sudan must contend with war and famine; it may not be able to escape its circumstances at all, due to danger and lack of money and transportation. Such facts represent, for Heidegger, very real limiting factors on Dasein's possibilities, to the point that those factors define the Dasein that it is; the fact that each Dasein is in the world in some way *is* what makes its possibilities unique and definite as compared with other Daseins that have other possibilities. In brief, for Dasein to have possibilities, it must have a world in which certain possibilities can be pursued while others cannot, that being possible in virtue of the circumstances of that Dasein's place in the world; it is the limits, in a very strong sense, that define what is possible. Were there no world, no "*Da*" in German, Dasein[115] would not exist, on account of there being no possibilities. Thus, Dasein must in some sense always have a world that is limiting in some way.

Recall, at this point, that anxiety is explicitly said to individualize Dasein. How exactly does that claim fit with the picture of Being-in-the-world just sketched? Are there any possibilities left for anxious Dasein? It appears not, the result being, as Dreyfus and Jane Rubin argue, that "anxiety has wiped out all intrinsic meaning and so all *reasons* for doing things."[116] Because of this, Dasein is left empty and without a world; , for this reason, according to Braver, "anxiety and anticipation of death revealed structural aspects of Dasein that couldn't be defined

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[115] While in general the German term "Dasein" means existence, in the sense of "the existence of some object," etymologically "Dasein" literally means "*Da* sein," "to be *there*," a point Heidegger himself draws attention to.
[116] Dreyfus 321.

wholly in terms of the world."[117] Dasein is Being-in-the-world, but anxiety strips Dasein of the grounds for possibilities, and so of its world. How does one reconcile Being-in-the-world with authenticity, then, if authenticity is anxious and anxiety severs Dasein from the world?

Recall the sources of anxiety—namely, the fact that Dasein can at any time pursue a different possibility, and the fact that those possibilities can change due to factors beyond Dasein's control. In the latter case in particular, it is the world that is impinging on Dasein's possibilities; if a large-scale war were to break out and the international order collapsed, my possibility of becoming a professor would become severely limited or disappear altogether. I have little or no power over such factors, and the awareness that something like this (or something more mundane, such as sudden financial hardship or an accident) could happen at any time and dramatically shift my possibilities is one of the sources of Dasein's anxiety. One is anxious because the world is *unheimlich*, uncanny or unsettled, meaning it does not provide certainty about what one's possibilities are and whether they will stay as they are. This point is essential, for it is tempting to read anxiety as implying that the world itself drops out altogether, that there is a full severing from the world itself, which indeed would conflict with the account of Being-in-the-world.

However, a close look at the text reveals that anxiety is not the dropping out of the world, but more precisely the recognition that nothing is totally determined or under one's control, that the world can change; in fact, nothing *drops out* in anxiety, neither the world nor the things in it. Though there appears to be much in Braver's claim that Heideggerian anxiety leaves us "drained of content,"[118] Heidegger's actual account is subtly different, in an important way. In "What is Metaphysics?" for example, Heidegger says that, "in their very receding [in anxiety], things turn

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[117] Braver 278.
[118] Braver 220.

toward us"[119] and oppress us with their contingency, their uncertainty: "The receding of beings as a whole, closing in on us in anxiety, oppresses us. We can get no hold on things."[120] In *Being and Time*, though Heidegger says that for anxious Dasein "the world has the character of completely lacking significance,"[121] he explains that

> The utter insignificance which makes itself known in the "nothing and nowhere", does not signify that the world is absent, but tells us that entities within-the-world are of so little importance in themselves that on the basis of this insignificance of what is within-the-world, the world in its worldhood is all that still obtrudes itself.[122]

Obtrusion, oppression, turning towards; these are not terms for the world dropping out, but for it appearing in a very distinct, overwhelming manner. The individualism of anxiety, in short, is not that of an individual who is left worldless, but one who is in the world in the specific way of not having a firm grasp on it, of lacking control over it, being in thrall to its contingency. Anxious Dasein's world is one where possibilities provide no final anchor or feeling of certainty.

While it is true, then, that anxiety "induces the slipping away of beings as a whole," Heidegger adds in the next sentence, in a way that maintains consistency with his account of Dasein as Being-in-the-world: "This implies that we ourselves—we humans who are in being [that is, human beings as always pursuing possibilities]—in the midst of beings slip away from ourselves," ourselves in terms of firm, established identities: "it is not as though "you" or "I" feel uncanny; rather, it is this way for some "one."" [123] If one goes, the other goes; this just follows from being Being-in-the-world. But neither truly disappears, though they both give the

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[119] *Pathmarks* 88.
[120] Ibid.
[121] *Being and Time* 231.
[122] Ibid.
[123] *Pathmarks* 88-9.

appearance of doing so. In anxiety particular features of one's identity, formerly thought firm and permanent, fall away; our sense of ourselves as definite, established *ego cogito*s disintegrates. But neither the self nor the world actually disappears; rather, the world appears in the mode of not providing the permanent identity one formerly thought it did (via *das Man*), as being insufficient to ultimately define what one's possibilities are, and this insufficiency is what makes Dasein anxious. But being thus insufficient is not the same as ceasing to have any significance at all; things have the *character* of lacking significance, which is to say they are significant towards us in the sense of not appearing significant, not being what we need or are looking for—like Heidegger's famous example of the broken hammer, we see them, but specifically as being not what they are supposed to be. To refer only to passages that speak of Dasein as being "*solus ipse*" or as being separated from beings without such clarification leaves out the true nature of anxiety; anxiety is a way of Being-in-the-world, a way that things have significances, which requires that things still be there.[124]

It has been argued that keeping Being-in-the-world in mind is important to grasping several elements of the account of authenticity, the above examples showing its role in understanding possibility in general and anxiety. Despite this importance, the full connection between Being-in-the-world and authenticity itself is not made explicit by Heidegger until late in *Being and Time*, long after the initial accounts of *das Man* and authenticity. It is only then, with a turn in the hermeneutic spiral, that the non-individualistic story properly emerges.

The key comes where the discussion of resoluteness left off, as Heidegger explains that resoluteness must resolve upon the particular possibilities established in Dasein's Being-in-the-world, the latter being a world of possibilities that are not merely determined from out of the

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[124] This is not a complete response to Braver *et. al.*'s argument; the complete response includes the point that Dasein, to be authentic, must once more grasp its possibilities, grasp the world that Dasein never left but that it no longer thinks itself part of in an obvious, taken for granted, inauthentic way. This is what will be explained next.

individual. In fact, "*The resolution,*" Heidegger writes, "*is precisely the disclosive projection and determination of what is factically possible at the time*. To resoluteness, the *indefiniteness* characteristic of every potentiality-for-Being into which Dasein has been *factically thrown*, is something that necessarily *belongs*."[125] Resolution, according to the passage just quoted, determines "what is factically possible," the situation into which Dasein has been "factically thrown." The term 'facticity' in *Being and Time* refers to the concreteness of Dasein's existing in a given set of circumstances; it is the fact (forgive the term) that Dasein exists in a world of already determined features and meanings, of a situation that already is one way rather than another. Factically, Heidegger says elsewhere, Dasein always exists as thrown into a particular situation, a world: "it has in each case already been thrown *into a world*."[126] In other words, as was just discussed, the fact that Dasein has possibilities at all is only true in virtue of there being a world, and the world is not something that Dasein creates or controls; rather, Dasein is *thrown* (the German term, *geworfen*, has exactly the same connotations as the English 'thrown') into it. Thus the world, something beyond Dasein's control, determines what possibilities Dasein can resolve upon. And the world that establishes Dasein's possibilities does not limit itself to the physical earth, the environment, or the like; Heidegger's own examples of the sorts of involvements constitutive of a world are a workshop and a farmstead, places whose meaning is determined by human social and historical facts and relations.[127] Since resolution resolves upon some definite possibility, and such possibilities come from the world, and the world it is anything but free of socio-historical factors, in fact is largely constituted by it (after all, my world of dissertations and philosophy conferences did not spring from the earth fully formed), resoluteness itself can only mean the resolute grasping one's particular world, including socio-

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[125] *Being and Time* 345. (Final emphasis mine.)
[126] *Being and Time* 236.
[127] *Being and Time* 116.

historical circumstances. This total set of circumstances Heidegger calls "the Situation,"[128] the

way in which Dasein's world is disclosed to its understanding, Dasein's particular web of

meanings at a given time and place. Think once more of my situation (in the non-technical sense

of the term; when used in Heidegger's specific sense, it will be captialized) versus that of the

Dasein in Sudan; resoluteness must resolve upon definite possibilities, and those that belong to

myself and the other Dasein are not determined solely by what each of us chooses, as though

anxiety made our circumstances perfectly equal—the world does not, cannot disappear in that

way. This is no Sartrean freedom. My Situation, and the other Dasein's, are not things that come

from within, but largely from without, and 'without' largely means society, culture, and history.

How does all of this relate to *das Man* and the role of the public in inauthenticity? *Das

Man*, after all, is part of the world, part of one's Situation just like anything else. If Dasein must

reject *das Man*'s possibilities in order to be authentic, what else is there to return to authenically,

when it comes to tradition, history, and culture? In fact, resoluteness is itself a return to *das Man*

as a constitutive part of the Situation: "Resolution . . . discovers first what is factically possible;

and *it does so by seizing upon it in whatever way is possible for it as its ownmost potentiality-for-

Being in* [das Man]."[129] Guignon, in his critique of Zimmerman, correctly explains that Dasein's

Being being Being-in-the-world means that the meanings Dasein comes across are meanings that

have been generated not from timeless nature, God's hand, or rugged individuals, but from the

society and tradition that exists around Dasein: "Only because we have been initiated into a

shared "we-world" can we handle ourselves in coherent, normalized ways. But this means that

all of the possible roles and self-interpretations we can take over have been laid out in advance

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[128] *Being and Time* 346.
[129] Ibid. Emphasis mine.

by [*das Man*]."[130] The very same socio-historical understandings and interpretations that are necessary for there to be such things as the university system, a set of tools, the First World War, etc. *at all*, are the very same that can exercise pressure and control as *das Man*.

While it is true, then, that *das Man* and socio-historical factors more broadly cannot be separated such that Dasein could accept one without the other, socio-historical factors only exercise a distorting influence as *das Man* in a specific case, namely when *das Man's* universalized possibilities are taken on specifically as a Dasein's own, to the detriment of any other factors; one can accept that the socio-historical world creates meanings without thinking that those meanings apply to everyone in the same way all the time. To think that I must follow one certain path to become a philosopher, even if other paths would work as well or better, is *das Man* in the distorting sense. But that there are such things as philosophy and philosophers at all is due to the very same socio-historical factors which give rise to *das Man*. The socio-historical world is what allows there to be possibilities at all, but it also has a tendency to pressure us as to what possibilities we should pursue and how we should pursue them, even if there are other possibilities just as good or better. There is a field known as philosophy that is a product of history and society, but that does not mean that there is only one way to enter into it. Thus, in breaking free of *das Man's* grip, Dasein does not ignore socio-historical influences or even *das Man* (as a part of those influences), nor need any of Dasein's concrete circumstances, life choices, or anything even change. Instead, it is the nature of Dasein's involvement with *das Man* that changes: "The 'world' which is ready-to-hand does not become another one 'in its content', nor does the circle of Others get exchanged for a new one; but both one's Being towards the ready-to-hand understandingly and concernfully, and one's solicitous Being with Others, are now

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[130] Guignon 203.

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given a definite character in terms of their ownmost potentiality-for-Being-their-Selves,"[131] as

opposed to being accepted simply because it is what common sense and *das Man* say to do.

Dasein grasps authentically and as its own what *das Man* generates and then attempts to foist

upon it in a universal, generalized, and inauthentic way; it grasps its possibilities not because one

does x, but because x is what that Dasein's Situation makes possible for it. In sum: it's not what

you pursue, it's how you pursue it.

If authentic Dasein is Dasein that resolutely accepts its Situation, and Dasein's Situation

is shaped not just occasionally and slightly, but invariably by socio-historical factors (which, to

emphasize, are always part of what constitutes Dasein's world: "[T]he world is always the one

that I share with Others. The world of Dasein is a *with-world* [*Mitwelt*]."[132]), it follows that to

become authentic requires that Dasein reckon in some way with its history, insofar as that history

plays a part in the make-up of its world. For a given Dasein, that means reckoning not just with

history in the broad sense of world history, but reckoning with its *own* history, where that means

all of the traditions, inheritances, and so on that help shape its Being-in-the-world and so its

Situation. It is with this in mind that Chapter 5 of Division Two of *Being and Time* turns to

history. Heidegger begins with an admission that should be noted carefully: the discussion of

authenticity thus far, in which anticipatory resoluteness of Being-towards-death discloses

Dasein's Situation, has been "one-sided"[133] in its emphasis on the future:

> As long as Dasein factically exists, both the 'ends' and their 'between' *are*, and they *are* in
> the only way which is possible on the basis of Dasein's Being as *care*. Thrownness and that
> Being towards death in which one either flees it or anticipates it, form a unity; and in this

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[131] *Being and Time* 344.
[132] *Being and Time* 155.
[133] *Being and Time* 425.

unity birth and death are 'connected' in a manner characteristic of Dasein. As care, Dasein *is* the 'between'.[134]

To say that Dasein has possibilities is not only a reference to the future; as seen earlier, in order for there to be possibilities at all there must be something that allows them to exist as specific possibilities to be pursued. Possibilities exist because the world is a certain way; to use a very brute example, breathing is a possibility for me only because the Earth's atmosphere has oxygen. To say that Dasein has possibilities is also to say, then, that Dasein has a past, since the past shapes and determines those possibilities are, just as my past and that of the Dasein from Sudan have different possibilities shaped not only by what is currently available for us to make use of, but also by what my Situation growing up in America has made possible compared to that of someone living in a war-torn part of Africa. It must always be remembered that, in virtue of being a being with possibilities, Dasein is connected both to its future and to its past, its oncoming death and its history (birth). Since Dasein's historical circumstances form part of its Being-in-the-world, authentic Dasein, in reckoning with death, must reckon also with those circumstances: "One's anticipatory projection of oneself on that possibility of existence which is not to be outstripped—on death—guarantees only the totality and authenticity of one's resoluteness. But those possibilities of existence which have been factically disclosed are not to be gathered from death."[135] Resolution is nothing more than a formal exercise unless it resolves upon something; what it resolves upon comes from history. What should be clear at this point is that the introduction of history into the study of authentic Dasein, whatever it amounts to, is not

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[134] *Being and Time* 426-7. That death is a common topic in the literature for *Being and Time*, whereas birth is barely spoken of, is of some note here. For just as death does not mean the physiological fact of dying (demise), but rather death in terms of its impact on Dasein's possibilities, birth is not simply the physiological fact of having a date at which one's life began. The emphasis on death rather than birth in the literature appears to mirror the general prioritizing of Being-towards-death and Dasein's relation to the future over authentic historizing and Dasein's relation to history in the secondary literature on *Being and Time*.
[135] *Being and Time* 434.

just "tacked on," as Zimmerman rather dismissively claims. Given that Dasein is Being-in-the-world and given what Being-in-the-world is, a necessary role for history follows naturally from a full account of authenticity. With Dasein's way of relating to its history, its 'historizing,' as Heidegger calls it, the investigation returns once more to Dasein's authenticity, and so once more to how Dasein becomes its own: "we come back in our investigation to . . . the constancy of the Self,"[136] meaning a self in history.

How does authentic Dasein relate to its history? The discussion is extremely brief, taking up a mere five pages in the English edition of *Being and Time*,; and, unfortunately, this brevity is not due to conciseness. Heidegger begins by saying that authentic historizing requires a "handing down" of Dasein's possibilities to itself.[137] This does not mean that Dasein decides what possibilities it will give to itself, but rather that Dasein takes over its thrownness, accepts that it exists factically in circumstances that are not entirely, or even much at all, of its own choosing. This act of handing down Heidegger calls 'fate,' "Dasein's primordial historizing," "in which Dasein hands itself down to itself, free for death, in a possibility which it has inherited and yet has chosen."[138] Again, this is not a proposing of possibilities, but a grasping of what possibilities Dasein already has, based on its (historical) Situation. What is actually passed down is referred to as Dasein's 'heritage.' Since the heritage is what is taken over, it is clear that it is related to Dasein's possibilities as what are handed down to it, and possibly refers to Dasein's facticity understood in a historical sense. Presumably, my heritage would include my growing up in a particular part of the world, with a family of a certain income level, a certain place on the American socio-cultural ladder, and so on; that of the Sudanese Dasein would include that

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[136] *Being and Time* 427.
[137] *Being and Time* 435.
[138] Ibid.

Dasein's political situation, tribe, family history, and so on. However, Heidegger does little to clarify the concept of heritage further, a point that will become important shortly.

Second, since Dasein's Being-in-the-world includes existing as Being-with Others, authentic historicizing is not something done by each Dasein on its own, just as anticipatory resoluteness doesn't meant that the world drops out of view. Authentic Dasein, as seen above, doesn't remove its relation to others, but rather comes to that relation in a new way; likewise, authentic Dasein comes to relate to fellow members of its heritage in a new way. For my heritage is not just mine, presumably, but includes that part of my Being-in-the-world that I share with others who grew up with me[139], one that can be clearly distinguished from the heritage of the Daseins of Sudan; this broader, non-personal fate, which "is not something that puts itself together out of individual fates,"[140] is Dasein's destiny. For Dasein's "historizing is a co-historizing,"[141] and so one's grasping of heritage as fate must also be a grasping of destiny.

Several important questions about heritage, fate, and destiny are left lingering at this point. For instance: Dasein's heritage is that which is taken over in resoluteness. How, exactly? The passage where Heidegger discusses heritage is as follows, in its entirety:

> The resoluteness in which Dasein comes back to itself, discloses current factical possibilities of authentic existing, and discloses them *in terms of the heritage* which that resoluteness, as thrown, *takes over*. In one's coming back resolutely to one's thrownness, there is hidden a handing down to oneself of the possibilities that have come down to one, but not necessarily *as* having thus come down. If everything 'good' is a heritage, and the character of 'goodness'

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[139] But if it's not just mine, how exactly does heritage relate to Dasein's facticity, which seems to consist of everything belonging to each *individual* Dasein? Is it just that several Daseins have a certain element of facticity in the same way, a common element across many individuals? Yet Heidegger explicitly says, as noted presently, that heritage *qua* destiny is not just a sum of the fates of individual Daseins. In that case, are there separate heritages for individuals and groups? The two, it appears, can't just be the same, but Heidegger gives no clear explanation, indeed no explanation at all, of how the two relate. This question is not the only one that will be inadequately answered in the course of this discussion of authentic historizing.

[140] *Being and Time* 436.

[141] Ibid.

lies in making authentic existence possible, then the handing down of a heritage constitutes itself in resoluteness.[142]

Is heritage something like a set of limiting factors on Dasein's possibilities? As noted above, that makes heritage out to be a filling in of the concept of facticity, where insofar as Dasein must grasp its thrownness, it must also of course grasp its facticity, thus its heritage. Further, Heidegger speaks of heritage specifically in terms of possibilities, and its own possibilities (what 'its own possibilities' refers to, something that has seemed reasonably straightforward thus far, will become more complicated shortly) are what Dasein must take over. Is the term 'heritage,' then, meant specifically to describe the historical aspect of Dasein's possibilities, as opposed to the anticipatory aspect? Again, here one finds reason to think that heritage is meant to be a sort of clarification of facticity, but it's not clear how exactly it is serving that purpose. What work is the concept of heritage doing that facticity did not, such that it requires a new term? Further, what exactly does it mean to say that a heritage is handed down, but not as having been handed down? And how does one do this to oneself? Is it just an acceptance of what is already there? The third sentence in the quotation, which appears to be an attempt to bring heritage back to resoluteness, only makes things worse. While one can say with some justification that much in Heidegger's work is unclear, the explanation of heritage is unclear in a very un-Heideggerian sense: Heidegger, who usually goes to great lengths to define his technical terms and their relationships to related terms, spends almost no time clarifying the exact role of 'heritage' in the broader context of his terminology.

More problems arise when one asks about the relationship between fate and destiny. If destiny is not just a grouping together of individual fates, what is it, exactly? What is the

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[142] *Being and Time* 435.

difference between fate and destiny, if Dasein's Being-in-the-world always is in some respect

Being-with Others? Likewise, if historizing is always co-historizing, if authenticity always

includes one's relation to other Daseins, how can there be a grasping fate separate from destiny?

What is the purpose of the separate concepts? Perhaps fate is heritage insofar as Dasein takes it

on itself, whereas destiny is Dasein's grasp of history as part of its people, as part of a larger

group. This reading receives support when Heidegger says that "Resoluteness implies handing

oneself down . . . , and this handing down we call "fate". This is also the ground for destiny, by

which we understand Dasein's historizing in Being-with Others."[143] But does this imply that

Dasein can accept its fate, but not its destiny, if Dasein's people fails to pursue its heritage?

What of the reverse? Can Dasein be towards others in a way that grasps its destiny, while the

others fail to do so? The passage just quoted seems to imply this. On the other hand, Heidegger

says that Dasein's historizing is a co-historizing, and that co-historizing is destiny. Is fate not

separable from destiny, then? Are they the same? If fate were no different from destiny, how

could a Dasein have a fate of its own outside of the fate of its community? In that case, why use

different terms? In the discussion that ensues, Heidegger uses first one term, 'fate' or 'destiny,'

then the other, and sometimes speaks of "fateful destiny,"[144] and it's not always clear what the

reasoning for choosing one or the other at a given time is. And all that aside, where exactly does

heritage fall in this discussion? The most likely story, I believe, is that fate is Dasein handing

itself its heritage, where heritage appears to be facticity *qua* the history of that Dasein's people,

and that authentic historizing will at the same time involve Being-with other Daseins as part of

one's history, and that Being-with others *qua* historizing is destiny. Therefore, fate is a grasping

of one's heritage as a subset of one's facticity, and grasping fate always implies grasping destiny,

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[143] *Being and Time* 438.
[144] *Being and Time* 436.

for it includes Being-with Others in the relevant way. But the discussion is deeply muddled, in particular when it comes to the relation between Dasein and the people it is a member of when it comes to historizing. So long as the relationship between these terms remains unclear, the relationship between Dasein's historizing as an individual and its historizing as part of a community or people remains unclear as well.

Heidegger leaves these issues behind, however, and continues on to the third element of authentic historicity, repetition. "*Repeating*," says Heidegger, "*is handing down explicitly*—that is to say, going back into the possibilities of the Dasein that has-been-there."[145] Yet, following Kierkegaard, this repetition is not meant to be a mere repeating of a previous possibility exactly as it was; instead, repetition for Heidegger appears to be more of a response to the past, or a response to Dasein's heritage, the "Dasein that has-been-there." It is thus a "*reciprocative rejoinder*,"[146] a taking hold in some manner of what has been for the purposes of Dasein's forward-looking possibilities. For this reason, Heidegger says with some justification that authentic historizing arises from the future, since such historizing is undertaken for the sake of current Dasein's possible ways to be, which extend into the future. Authentic history is not simply recognizing past events, but a response to one's heritage that takes them properly into account for the sake of current action.

This aspect of the account of historicity has its own problems, for repetition is not explained very well at all in the single paragraph Heidegger devotes to an essential aspect of authentic historicity. While Heidegger says that repetition is not simply a repeating of past events as they happened, for example, it's not clear just what its relation to past events *is*. One "follows

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[145] *Being and Time* 437.
[146] *Being and Time* 438.

in the footsteps of that which can be repeated,"[147] and Heidegger says directly that this is not a simple recurrence of past events. Fair enough; it seems that the past must be kept in mind in some special and explicit way in grasping one's possibilities. But how? What is this 'reciprocative rejoinder' that Dasein undertakes? With repetition and the rejoinder, Heidegger seems to be bringing into the picture not just one's general history, traditions, culture, and the like, but to be referring to something both more specific (in the sense that *something* is repeated, it is a rejoinder "to the possibility of that existence which has-been-there"[148]) and yet grand in scope (for repetition seems to bring to completion the connection between authenticity and Dasein's own particular history; repetition of a possibility is essentially the authentic choice of Dasein's possibilities – "the possibility that Dasein may choose its hero"[149]). How that all comes together, though, as with much of this section, isn't fully clear, and Heidegger moves on in the next section to discuss historizing and history in the more commonly understood and inauthentic sense, as the recording of the past.

These questions about authentic historicity remain unanswered in *Being and Time*, and because they remain unanswered, the connection between authenticity and history is, at the end of the day, somewhat undeveloped. Which is not to say that nothing has been learned; quite the opposite. Authentic existence obviously involves Dasein taking over its history in some important way, to the point that there is some sort of clear and intentional rejoinder to Dasein's past history. At the same time, this taking over of history is not isolated to a lone Dasein, since, to repeat, Dasein's "historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative for it as destiny [*Geschick*]." This much can certainly be said: authenticity in *Being and Time* is irreducibly historical in character, because Dasein's own Being is such that it is always in a world that is

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[147] *Being and Time* 437.
[148] *Being and Time* 438.
[149] Ibid.

constituted in large part historically. Its possibilities are shaped by socio-historical factors outside of its control, including those that also go to make up *das Man*. Even in anxiety, Dasein is still confronted by a social, historical world, though one that does not offer it settled, final meanings for anything. And authenticity, insofar as it must grasp possibilities, must grasp possibilities that emerge from a very non-individualistic milieu. *Being and Time* is thus not individualist; it is not even close. It is historical through and through.

Why, despite the central role for history, have so many read *Being and Time* in an individualistic way? There are several likely reasons. First, Heidegger reserves all talk of history for the final chapters of the book; the initial discussions of authenticity include no discussion of the positive role of history. Second, the introduction of socio-historical factors is via *das Man* and inauthenticity; in this way, history and socio-historical factors appear in a negative light. Third, though he more than once denies it, Heidegger's language often appears to imply that *das Man* is an evil that must be cast away. Fourth, Heidegger specifically talks of individualization with anxiety, which is only true in a highly qualified sense – in anxiety, Dasein is thrown back from *das Man*'s grip and from engagement in the world to its own possibilities, but it cannot and does not leave the world, and what is left is not a worldless subject. Fifth, something I did not touch on directly, is that the description of death as 'ownmost, nonrelational, and not to be outstripped' appears to indicate that each Dasein is unique in a way that society cannot touch. But as with anxiety, though a Dasein can and is individualized in a sense in this way, that does not mean that authentic recognition of death takes one outside of history; rather, it simply means that part of grasping Dasein's facticity is grasping one more element, death, which always bears to some degree on all of other possibilities.[150] Sixth, when Heidegger does get to authentic

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[150] In the same way, one's physical body is part of one's facticity that is in some sense individuating, but this latter fact is never given any special import in *Being and Time*. And not because Heidegger simply ignores it; he

history, the discussion is brief and obscure, to the point that it is perhaps little wonder now that

Zimmerman thought so little of it. Finally, as was said during the broader discussion of the

individualist and activist interpretations, Heidegger's language taken as a whole appears to be

broadly pushing an individualist view—the public, epitomized by *das Man*, is bad, and authentic,

existential self-realization is good. Heidegger explicitly denies any such intent. Whether he is a

moralizer or not, a thorough look at the text itself shows that authenticity in *Being and Time* truly

is grounded in Dasein's history.

2.4 RESOLVE, THE MOMENT OF VISION, AND TAKING ACTION

Next I turn to the activist interpretations of authenticity in *Being and Time*. This view is

best understood by its opposite, the presumed passivism that most find in Heidegger's later

works, and which is thought to be a reversal of Heidegger's earlier position. Haar, in pushing the

activist reading, opposes it to the passivism he finds in works from "What is Metaphysics?"

on,[151] in which work he says that "the thoughts and acts of negation, as well as the transcendence

of *Dasein* beyond entities as a whole, come to be rooted in the force of nihilation and *no longer*

in the tension of resoluteness."[152] In other words, the break between Dasein and the world (the

negation of the world, to use the term from "What is Metaphysics?") is not something that comes

from Dasein's choosing to be resolute, but from an outside force, that of nihilation, which comes

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infamously avoids any further discussion of the body via a parenthetical found in the section titled "The Spatiality of Being-in-the-World," a place where the role of the physical body would naturally appear: "This 'bodily nature' hides a whole problematic of its own, though we shall not treat it here." (*Being and Time* 143) It is this evasion that provides the foundation for Merleau-Ponty's work in *The Phenomenology of Perception* and other writings.

[151] As mentioned previously, Haar is unusual in saying of the 1929 text that it "is marked by all the signs of a reversal;" (Haar 50) few would push the *Kehre* back that far. In general, Haar's chronology of the *Kehre* is curious. *Being and Time* is definitely before it, 1929 at least somewhat into it, and yet *Introduction to Metaphysics*, a lecture course from 1935, he says is clearly activist (see Haar 102). Nevertheless, his illustration of the active/passive distinction is succinct and representative.

[152] Haar 51.

from Being. The passivist reading holds that, for the later Heidegger, it is Being (or the History of Being) that determines the course of history as well as of individuals within that history. Individuals cannot, on their own, have any impact on whether history is better or worse understood, or on whether they relate authentically to their history. In *Being and Time*, on the other hand, it is purportedly up to Dasein to become resolute and to accept its history. Being does not do this for it—resoluteness involves a self-initiated, self-sustained course of action against which any form of passivity leads straight back to inauthenticity.

Along these lines, Olafson argues in his account of the *Kehre* that Heidegger resolved problems in determining the relationship between Dasein and Being "by simply dropping the active and projective character of Dasein from his theory . . . from the mid-thirties onward."[153] This, of course, assumes that Dasein has an active and projective character (which is to say, a type of character that identifies and takes over the pursuit of possibilities on its own) in *Being and Time*, a point that does not generally invite much further discussion in the literature.

What is it, exactly, that is supposed to make Dasein activist in *Being and Time*? One element is what Olafson references above, what he calls Dasein's "projective character." Part of Dasein's existential constitution, something that Dasein is not Dasein without, is projection (*Entwurf*, which has connotations of throwing—recall that 'thrownness' is *geworfen*—but typically means 'design' or 'plan'). Dasein always projects itself forward upon its possibilities, which is another way of saying that Dasein is at all times relating to, moving towards, its future, trying to realize possibilities. Thus Dasein is always in some way beyond itself, beyond just what it is (meaning its facticity, its past circumstances), and part of its existence consists in the fact that it is always moving in some way beyond that background, it is always more than the list of known facts about it: "Because of the kind of Being which is constituted by the *existentiale* of

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[153] Olafson 109.

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projection, Dasein is constantly 'more' than it factually is."[154] If Dasein is always more than its

facticity, then facticity (which includes its history and the socio-historical influence in it in

general) is not exhaustive of Dasein; how Dasein relates to its future is not merely determined by

the circumstances around it, and Dasein has some sort of choice as to what it will be. Sartre

famously develops a radically voluntarist version of this point when he claims that consciousness

"is not what it is:" this is the case, Sartre says, because "making sustains being; consciousness

has to be its own being, it is never sustained by being."[155] There is nothing but consciousness

that sustains itself, keeps it going, in its projects; consciousness, for Sartre, is radically free as a

result, always choosing what it will or will not be.

But Sartre is not Heidegger, and Sartre's radical freedom is far different from what

Heidegger, in his discussion of authentic historicity, calls the "power of [Dasein's] finite

freedom," such that this freedom, "which 'is' only in its having chosen to make such a choice . . .

, can take over the *powerlessness* of abandonment to its having done so, and can thus come to

have a clear vision for the accidents of the Situation that has been disclosed."[156] That Dasein is a

projecting being, always pursuing futural, unrealized possibilities, does not mean that Dasein

freely chooses those possibilities willy nilly; at best, it does so in a peculiar, and very limited,

sense. What Dasein projects are possibilities, but possibilities, as previously discussed, do not

come from just anywhere. They come from the world, which just is the very facticity, the world

of delimited possibilities, that Dasein is more than. The claim that Dasein is more than what it is,

then, must be parsed carefully, for Heidegger heavily qualifies his statement in the very next

sentence: "Dasein is constantly 'more' than it factually is . . . . But Dasein is never more than it

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[154] *Being and Time* 185.
[155] Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992) 62.
[156] *Being and Time* 436.

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factically is, for to its facticity its potentiality-for-Being belongs essentially."[157] He explains: "Projection always pertains to the full disclosedness of Being-in-the-world; as potentiality-for-Being, understanding has itself possibilities, which are sketched out beforehand within the range of what is essentially disclosable in it."[158] This should be fairly intuitive after the extended discussion of history's role for Dasein. Dasein is defined by the pursuit of possibilities (hence more than what it factically is), but such pursuit is impossible without some way of defining possibilities. Possibilities are defined in virtue of facticity—the amount of freedom one does or doesn't have is not up to one, but depends upon the particulars of one's Situation, and is always subject to that Situation. Whereas Sartre would say that the Dasein in Sudan is free to accept his fate or rebel against it, Heidegger would not accept such a claim. Even in projection, one is projecting the possibilities that are already there, and cannot create new ones. History determines what one projects upon; projection, then, provides no activism besides taking over one's 'powerlessness,' to use Heidegger's term; one projects upon the possibilities one already has. Nor does Dasein choose whether or not to project in the first place: "any Dasein has, as Dasein, already projected itself; and as long as it is, it is projecting."[159] Dasein is already in a history, and already has possibilities based on that history upon which it is projecting. It can choose to accept its history, or not, but those possibilities do not change through its choice (nor, of course, is it guaranteed that those possibilities will not change due to circumstances beyond its control—such is the anxiety of being Dasein).

So much for projection, and with it what we typically think of as free choice, as undergirding a form of activism. Though that is the strongest form of activism that might be imputed to *Being and Time*, it is not the only one. The discussion of projection, and in particular

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[157] *Being and Time* 185.
[158] *Being and Time* 186.
[159] *Being and Time* 185.

its relation to history, informs another way in which activism appears to arise; namely, in the discussion of *das Man* and our tendency to accept the possibilities it offers. *Das Man*, Heidegger says, is tempting. It is tempting because it offers an escape from the anxiety of an unsettled world, something Dasein wants to avoid. If Dasein's tendency is to accept *das Man*'s inauthentic understanding of the world, and resoluteness requires resisting this temptation, then another sort of activism appears. This new possibility holds that *Being and Time* is activist insofar as Dasein must itself choose to see past *das Man*'s control and recognize that it could become authentic. Regardless of whether becoming authentic then requires a relation to society and history, it is up to Dasein, and Dasein alone, to see past the temptation of inauthenticity, to call to itself via the call of conscience, and to resolve to acknowledge its possibilities authentically. This weaker form of activism aligns better with Zimmerman's account, and fits with some readings of Heidegger as an existentialist, such as Wrathall's. For Wrathall, "Heidegger's philosophy stands squarely in the existential tradition in Western thought," where "Existentialists emphasize passion over rational detachment [and] human freedom over the mechanistic workings of the physical universe, and the groundlessness and arbitrariness of our way of Life, as opposed to trusting in the ultimate rationality of the world."[160] Perhaps it isn't quite right to say that possibilities are arbitrarily chosen on Heidegger's view, given the importance of history, but the first two pieces of Wrathall's description seem like they could fit, and the second would qualify as activism. Similarly with Haar's description of individual enabling.   In brief, the claim being investigated is that breaking free of *das Man*'s grip and becoming authentic requires Dasein itself to make a choice to become authentic, which would mean that it of its own initiative chooses to reject the public understanding, to accept its anxiety, to grasp its true possibilities (i.e., its Situation), and to resolve upon its own possibilities. Though it cannot

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[160] Wrathall 59-60.

choose what its possibilities are, it can decide whether to pursue them or not; nothing prevents it, and importantly, nothing initiates the process but Dasein. This latter part is important because, recall, the activist thesis about *Being and Time* is typically set up in opposition to the passivist reading of Heidegger's later work, where Being initiates any such change. For Braver, the later Heidegger offers "new, revised form of . . . Passive Knower. The clearing or relation to beings is not created or instituted by us, as in the Kantian Paradigm; rather, it is "granted" or "sent" to us and we receive it."[161] For Haar, it is "link between anxiety and the self-manifestation of being"[162] that takes the place of individual enabling. As will be discussed in later chapters, it is purportedly Being that initiates, sends, offers, gifts Dasein its own possibilities; Dasein must be open to Being's gift, rather than asserting its possibilities, a line of thought epitomized in the title of the 1966 *Der Spiegel* interview, "Only a God Can Save Us." In this light, to call *Being and Time* 'activist' means that Dasein initiates the process of recognizing its true possibilities.

What is this process? It starts, of course, with Dasein being lost in the inauthentic possibilities prescribed by *das Man*. The description of the transition itself begins with introduction the call of conscience, briefly discussed before, and so it is to that that return.

The call of conscience, recall, is a call to Dasein to recognize its own possibilities; it is, as anxiety, also the awareness that Dasein's true possibilities are unsettled, that all is not perfectly determined for it, not even with the assurances of *das Man*. When the call of conscience appears is when the temptations of *das Man* fall away for the first time, revealing themselves to be hollow and insufficient for grounding Dasein's possibilities: "because only the *Self* of the [*Manselbst*] gets appealed to and brought to hear, [*das Man*] collapses."[163] The call does not have anything to say in particular, and in fact the peculiarity about it is that it remains utterly

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[161] Braver 275.
[162] Haar 51.
[163] *Being and Time* 317.

silent; the message, if anything, is rather the feeling of uncanniness, the awareness that the world is unsettled; "it does not call him into the public idle talk of [*das Man*], but calls him back from this into the reticence of his existent potentiality-for-Being."[164] This call is what leads Dasein onto the path of recognizing its anxiety, and with it its historical Situation. But where, exactly, does the call come from? Does Dasein initiate it, or does it arise from some other source? If the former, that seems to imply that Dasein is the one initiating its turn towards authenticity; if the latter, then it appears not to be up to Dasein when it starts to recognize its authentic possibilities.

The answer is a complicated one. On the one hand, Heidegger frames it as though it were obvious: "But is it at all necessary to keep raising explicitly the question of who does the calling? . . . *In conscience Dasein calls itself.*"[165] Dasein itself is the caller of Dasein; Dasein as anxious is the one who, without words, makes itself aware and forces itself to recognize the unsettledness of the world. This is how the call is capable of being experienced as uncanniness—rather than being a message that actually goes from one party to another, it is an experience of Dasein, an experience of one's own conscience (which makes a kind of intuitive sense—if you're going to call it the call *of conscience*, it would be a bit strange if one's conscience belonged to someone else). Thus the question appears to be answered: Dasein wakes itself up to awareness, calls itself to action. No outside force does the calling, a point that Heidegger emphasizes: "we need not resort to powers with a character other than that of Dasein; indeed, recourse to these is so far from clarifying the uncanniness of the call that instead it annihilates it."[166] This comes across in some ways like Sartre's description of the phenomenon bad faith, where a person is in a way both aware and unaware of her own situation, pretending that she is free when she is also unfree, and unfree when she is free. Though a person in bad faith tries to deceive herself, the deception

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[164] *Being and Time* 322.
[165] *Being and Time* 320.
[166] *Being and Time* 323.

will always fail, Sartre says, because to deceive oneself requires knowing what one is hiding: "I must know in my capacity as deceiver the truth which is hidden from me in my capacity as the one deceived."[167] Likewise, it appears, in anxiety Dasein tries to deceive itself, but it is always open to no longer doing so.

That Dasein is the source of the call which initiates the move towards authenticity is indisputable. However, things become suddenly more complicated, and again Heidegger's picture and that of Sartre diverge—for though Dasein initiates the call of conscience, Dasein does not actually *choose* to do so. On this point Heidegger is equally emphatic:

> Indeed the call is precisely something which *we ourselves* have neither planned nor prepared for nor voluntarily performed, nor have we ever done so. 'It' calls, against our expectations and even against our will. On the other hand, the call undoubtedly does not come from someone else who is with me in the world. The call comes *from* me and yet from *beyond* me.[168]

To use an analogy: When I sneeze, it is not because I do so freely, even though it is I who sneeze, and no one else makes me. The sneeze merely comes from me, as a result of facts about what I am, and I have no control over when and where it occurs. Likewise, the call of conscience is basically, so to speak, anxiety's knocking on the door. Since Dasein's constitution is such that it is always unsettled, it is always in a state of uncanniness, and thus of anxiety. That that doesn't seem to be the case is just due to the fact that we spend most of our time trying to avoid it. As Heidegger says in "What is Metaphysics?" rather ominously, "Anxiety is there. It is only sleeping. Its breath quivers perpetually through Dasein."[169] And given that the call itself exactly is the feeling of uncanniness ("The caller is Dasein in its uncanniness: primordial, thrown Being-

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[167] *Being and Nothingness* 49.
[168] *Being and Time* 320.
[169] *Pathmarks* 93.

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in-the-world as the "not-at-home""[170]), the call is not something that Dasein chooses to initiate at a given time or place; it is something that emerges seemingly like its own accord, like a sneeze or, truer to the concept, like a sudden moment of anxiety about the meaning and direction of one's life, a moment unasked for and unannounced: "Originary anxiety can awaken in Dasein at any moment. It needs no unusual event to arouse it."[171] It is true, that conscience comes from Dasein, but one cannot draw the conclusion that Dasein is therefore activist, if 'activist' here is used in the sense of Dasein choosing to initiate something. There is no choice to become anxious, because Dasein is already anxious, and Dasein does not decide when anxiety will bubble up from below. The call of conscience is the constant sense, suppressed to greater or lesser degrees (usually greater) at different times, that one is anxious about one's possibilities. *Being and Time*, therefore, is not activist in this second sense, because Dasein does not at all choose when to acknowledge the call and admit its unsettledness, the steps necessary to initiate the move to authenticity.

However, this is also not the end of the story. For there is yet another way in which one might find activism in *Being and Time*, weaker than the first two variants but not yet excluded. Granted that Dasein cannot choose what its possibilities are; granted that Dasein does not determine when it will be forced to see beyond *das Man* and towards its own possibilities; might there still be room for activism in the sense that Dasein must itself actively hold itself to, and maintain itself in, resoluteness? If Dasein has a tendency to fall into inauthenticity, the recognition of anxiety alone does not dissolve that tendency; perhaps, then, Dasein must itself take on the task of not just recognizing its anxiety, but of turning its awareness into a sustained resolution. Here another sort of activism does appears.

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[170] *Being and Time* 321.
[171] *Pathmarks* 93.

The call of conscience can be summarized as Dasein's being shaken out of its complete absorption in the world and *das Man* by the unannounced appearance of its anxiety, an anxiety that was always there but that, at this particular moment for reasons unknown, has suddenly surged forward. Anxiety, breaking Dasein from of its absorption, confronts it with a world free of illusions. In calling Dasein to anxiety, the call of conscience calls it to the possibility of grasping its possibilities as they really are, that is, grounded in its history and moving towards an unsettled future. In this way anxiety, via the call, first opens up the real possibility of becoming authentic, of grasping one's possibilities, because it "calls Dasein *forth* to the possibility of taking over, in existing, even that thrown entity which it is."[172] The call comes from Dasein not simply insofar as it is anxious, but from Dasein as a possessor of possibilities. To acknowledge that the call is a call from oneself and in particular from one's unsettledness, is to acknowledge that one's possibilities are a certain way, to have a certain understanding of one's Situation (though that term doesn't yet come up in Heidegger's discussion). Because of this, "Hearing the appeal correctly is thus tantamount to having an understanding of oneself in one's ownmost potentiality-for-Being."[173] The link between hearing the appeal and having a particular understanding is essential, for Heidegger continues:

> When Dasein understandingly lets itself be called forth to this possibility, this includes its *becoming free* for the call—its readiness for the potentiality of getting appealed to. In understanding the call, Dasein is *in thrall to* [*hörig*] *its ownmost possibility of existence*. It has chosen itself.[174]

[172] *Being and Time* 333.
[173] Ibid.
[174] *Being and Time* 334.

Here again comes the language of choice. At this point, one might be tempted to to write

off any discussion of choice or will as deceptive, as has often seemed to be the case thus far. But

here there is a specific relation between knowing and acting at work. To understand the appeal

that conscience makes is not just to intellectually understand something, to be able to formulate

true statements about the world, but for Dasein to "let itself" be called forth into a possibility, to

open itself up to it—Dasein becomes free for its ownmost possibility, readies itself for it.

Conscience is an experience, after all, not something articulated in words. Further down,

Heidegger will repeat that "In understanding the call, Dasein lets its ownmost Self *take action in*

itself [*in sich handeln*] in terms of that potentiality-for-Being which it has chosen."[175] Recall that

Dasein has a *tendency* to fall into inauthentic understanding. (This, one now sees, is because

authentic experience is unsettling, anxious; it recognizes that the very possibilities that define

Dasein's existence are contingent.) Inauthenticity is thus tempting: "In the face of its thrownness

Dasein flees to the relief which comes with the supposed freedom of the [*Manselbst*]."[176] In this

context, for Dasein to *let* itself be open or take action, then, is not the same as submitting to

something. To let itself take action requires refusing to accept the possibilities of *das Man*. But

Dasein's constitution does not incline it towards this; Dasein is inclined towards the opposite. As

Heidegger says later on, while resolute "Dasein is already in irresoluteness [*Unentschlossenheit*],

and soon, perhaps, will be in it again."[177] Thus, it's proper to say some sort of activity on

Dasein's part is involved in being open, because being open requires resistance against an

existential tendency of Dasein. Nor is there some other power behind such being open; it is,

Heidegger says, Dasein that brings this about. Nor does this openness come about in the way that

the call of conscience comes about, without warning or alternative; Dasein at this point is aware

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[175] Ibid.
[176] *Being and Time* 321.
[177] *Being and Time* 345.

of its anxiety, and the temptation it feels, the so to speak 'natural' position, is to misunderstand or ignore the call, to fall back into inauthenticity. Opposing such a temptation requires an act of resistance, and doing so for any length of time requires sustained resistance. Understanding the call correctly is thus an admittance of what one's possibilities are, a "readiness for the potentiality of getting appealed to" in terms of its possibilities. For this reason, Heidegger says that ""Understanding the appeal" means "wanting to have a conscience","[178] where Dasein is now choosing to accept the call.

Proper understanding of the call of conscience is thus a form of action, because it requires Dasein to keep aware of, and fight the tendency to avoid, its real possibilities. And it is a form of action that does not come from anything but Dasein', Dasein aware of what is at stake and choosing to persist in that awareness rather than let it slip away. Thus Heidegger can fairly call it a choice (if one keeps in mind the very limited idea of freedom Heidegger has in mind), and it is one that is self-initiated by Dasein. Dasein did not choose to have the truth of its anxiety presented to it in the first place, but it does choose whether or not it accepts it or falls back into inauthenticity. Rather than fleeing, authentic Dasein opens itself to its true possibilities, something that, given Dasein's constitution, takes genuine action. And the understanding that arises in wanting to have a conscience amounts to a disclosing of the world to Dasein, an acknowledgement of the way the world is. "This distinctive and authentic disclosedness, which is attested in Dasein itself by its conscience—*this reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety*—we call "*resoluteness*"."[179]

Resoluteness, then, is activist. It is activist in a narrow, very specific sense—not in the sense that Dasein can actively determine what its authentic resolution will be, or even whether

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[178] *Being and Time* 334.
[179] *Being and Time* 343.

becoming authentic is a possibility that it will consider, but in the sense of actively maintaining the particular Situation that resoluteness discloses to it as being its ownmost possibility. It is the finite freedom of Dasein to choose its history, to "choose its hero," which is not a reference to picking whatever hero it wants, but deciding whether to choose the only real hero that is there (its heritage), or to reject it (i.e., be inauthentic). At around this point in the text one finds one of the few direct references to, and the only substantial (if one paragraph can qualify as 'substantive') discussion of, action. "As resolute," Heidegger says, "Dasein is already *taking action*."[180] But, he warns, he is reticent to use the word 'action,' for two reasons, both of which are now comprehensible. First, "this term must be taken so broadly that "activity" [*Aktivitat*] will also embrace the passivity of resistance."[181] Indeed, this may be the most important form of activity, as activity appears primarily to involve resisting the pull to conform to *das Man*, and standing firm not in some novel possibility that one has invented, but in the possibilities that are already there. Second, building on the first point, one must not understand resoluteness "as if resoluteness were a special way of behaviour belonging to the practical faculty as contrasted with one that is theoretical."[182] There is no need for anything like literal action in resoluteness; as was seen in the earlier discussion of resoluteness, the world may very well stay exactly the same, with what changes being the way in which Dasein understands and relates to that world. Resoluteness is both an act of understanding and the action that conforms to that understanding. Resoluteness, then, is a sort of active, sustained openness to one's Situation, which is to say an active openness to the possibilities that exist in virtue of one's history. It is open to its world, but actively resists distorting that world. It accepts *das Man* as part of the world, but must actively refuse to be sucked into *das Man*'s generalizations and half-truths. *Being and Time* is active,

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[180] *Being and Time* 347.
[181] Ibid.
[182] *Ibid.*

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then, but only active in the special sense of an *active acceptance* of *or openness to one's socio-historical Situation, and a resistance to distortions of that Situation*. Not the usual form of activism by any stretch of the imagination.

Is *Being and Time* the pivotal proto-existentialist work, as many think? Or is existentialism, insofar as it is grounded in Heidegger (and especially Sartre's interpretation of Heidegger), grounded in a misconception? Mostly the latter. On first reading *Being and Time*, one can easily see how readers come away with a very assertive, anti-conformist interpretation of Heidegger's thought. If the discussion in this chapter appears to make that point look rhetorically weak, it should be recalled that the focus throughout was on directly refuting common conceptions of individualism and activism in Heidegger; when reading *Being and Time* itself, it is hard not to be overwhelmed by the accounts of *das Man*, inauthenticity, conscience, guilt, resoluteness, and more, with the prominence of *das Man*'s deceptiveness, of resoluteness' asserting the truth in contrast. The fact that Heidegger left his work unfinished, and that the final chapters were those discussing authenticity's relation to history, did nothing to help, as can be seen in the problems surrounding the section on authentic historicity.

Despite those problems, I believe, and have argued, that the text, when taken in full, largely speaks for itself. A full, coherent account of authenticity can be developed that gives proper due to history, and develops an activism, insofar as it is an activism at all, far from that of the existentialists. Not only is such a picture consistent, I argue, but it is the only picture that makes full sense of the text. To argue for individualism ultimately requires ignoring or dismissing chapters' worth of discussion of history, finding inconsistencies between anxiety and other parts of the work, and deemphasizing the role of Being-in-the-world, which is no less than

Dasein's own Being.[183] To argue for a strong, free sense of activism leaves aside the limits on

Dasein's possibility and freedom, and fails to comprehend the explanation of how authenticity

arises. How my account squares with Heidegger's position in later works has not yet been seen,

but at this point, at least, it can be said that the common view of Heidegger as existentialist must

fall to the wayside.

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[183] Special mention should be made of Charles Guignon, whose essay "Heidegger's Authenticity Revisited" argues for understanding *das Man* as not being something to be avoided, but part of Dasein's constitution. In so doing he argues, as I will be arguing, that individualist readings have a tendency "to obscure the continuity between Heidegger's early writings, such transitional works as the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, and his later writings." (*Heidegger Reexamined* 338) However, his article leaves much unexplored, both about authenticity in *Being and Time* (he says nothing about the active/passive distinction, for instance) and about what happens to it over the course of Heidegger's productive life (which he gestures at, but does not discuss). It is towards this larger project that my effort is directed.

CHAPTER 3

TURNING TO THE 30S

Having developed in the previous chapter a detailed picture of authenticity, and with it inauthenticity, as it appears in *Being and Time*, the next question is: how is the concept of authenticity, which if it is present at all is no longer called such, developed in Heidegger's works written during and after the *Kehre*? As discussed in the first chapter, there is some dispute as to when exactly the *Kehre* starts, or if it even has a clear beginning; some, such as Haar, place elements of it as early as "What is Metaphysics?" in 1929, though that is a fairly extreme view. In any case, it is not disputed that, whenever exactly the *Kehre* first starts, it is definitely pesent by the mid to late 1930s, certainly in *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, started in 1936. There, the structure and vocabulary of Heidegger's writings goes through a dramatic change, and it's beyond dispute that by the early 1940s that there has been a significant shift in how Heidegger conducts philosophy.

Perhaps the most direct exposition of the changes as they are in process is the 1938-9 treatise *Mindfulness*, the second of the be-ing-historical treatises. *Contributions* and *Mindfulness* are notable among Heidegger's works both for their frankness of content and obscurity of style; in them Heidegger directly addresses his evolving ideas and how he understands his previous work in a way that rarely appears in his lectures and courses, yet the writing style in these works ranges from incredibly challenging to indecipherable. Of the two treatises, *Mindfulness* is significantly clearer and more structurally coherent than its predecessor, *Contributions*; at the least, most of *Mindfulness* is written in complete sentences. Since both treatises cover basically the same set of topics in the same way, *Mindfulness* will be the central text in my examination of

authenticity in the mid to late 1930s. Yet since *Mindfulness* remains difficult, due in large part to the profusion of new terminology present in it, a companion text would be helpful. "The Origin of the Work of Art," a lecture first delivered in 1935, is among Heidegger's best-known lectures, and delves in particular into the active-passive dimension of authenticity. These two texts will form the basis of the discussion.

The discussion will move in roughly the same order as the previous chapter. I begin with a general description of technology and technological thinking as set against mindfulness, these concepts taking up the thematic space previously occupied by authenticity and inauthenticity. The discussion will thus simultaneously show Heidegger's account of history and its relation to authenticity at this point in time: How does man, no longer referred to as Dasein, typically relate to his socio-historical circumstances, and how can that relation become authentic? The account outlined there will then be used to help fill in the question of activism: what must mindful humankind do to enter into a better relation to its world? Is the process purely passive, as strong *Kehre* readers argue, or is there a qualified sort of activism similar to that found in *Being and Time*? Here, "On the Origin of the Work of Art" will help support my reading of *Mindfulness*.

While the basic sequence is similar to before, the flow of the discussion will be somewhat different, as the aim is not just interpretive but comparative: how does the account of authenticity, history, and action in *Mindfulness*, and to a lesser degree in "On the Origin of the Work of Art," square with the account given in *Being and Time*, point by point? If, as argued in the previous chapter, *Being and Time*'s account of authenticity has history playing a central role, one can assume that the change must not be as dramatic as strong *Kehre* readers suppose; however, knowing that does not answer the question of just what exactly, if anything, has changed. What, for example, happens to the role played by anxiety in *Being and Time*? What

about resoluteness? Perhaps there are still important content changes insofar as key elements of *Being and Time*'s account are removed or fundamentally altered later on. It is noteworthy, for instance, that terms such as 'anxiety' and 'resoluteness' are for the most part no longer used by Heidegger, except when explicitly referring back to *Being and Time*; are the corresponding concepts gone as well? To answer these questions, as concepts and terms from *Mindfulness* are examined, they will frequently be set against concepts from *Being and Time*.

It turns out, I argue, that not only is the basic view of authenticity, as historically informed and activist in a limited sense, similar to what is found in *Being and Time*; one can, in fact, go point by point through the major concepts introduced in *Being and Time*'s discussion of authenticity and find equivalents in *Mindfulness*. One point where there is a shift, however, is in the discussion of authentic historicity. The account of authentic historicity is not so much changed, however, as refined and fleshed out; it seems that it is still being developed at this time. It is, I suspect, this attempt to work out a more nuanced and complete account of authentic historicity, an essential but unfinished task in *Being and Time*, that gives works such as *Mindfulness* and those that come after their more historically oriented appearance.

3.1 WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH TEXNH?

In reckoning with authenticity in post-*Being and Time* works, the first and one of the most important difficulties one encounters is terminological. One of the biggest changes in Heidegger's later works is the near total disappearance of the terms 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity,' along with the related body of terms such as '*das Man*,' 'guilt,' 'anxiety,' 'resoluteness,' and so on, from the discussion. If one thinks solely in terms of terminology,

authenticity disappears altogether by the mid-1930s; when old terms do appear, they almost

always (*almost* always, but not always) refer back specifically to *Being and Time*'s account. For

example, in *Mindfulness,* instead of discussing inauthenticity and *das Man* as the distorting

influences on man's (*Mensch*, who is now rarely referred to as Dasein) possibilities, Heidegger

shifts focus to what he calls 'the epoch of technology.' Technology, referred to as 'technicity' in

the current English translation of *Mindfulness* (a translation I will mostly avoid outside of

quotations), appears to take on the role of obscuring man's true possibilities and replacing them

with ones that are not man's own. What is technology, and what is its role in *Mindfulness*?[184]

Heidegger says that our current age (referring in a broad sense to Western civilization

from Descartes on, but focused especially on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Europe) is

the epoch of technology. One might initially think of the industrial revolution or *The Terminator*

here, and both of those are related, but 'the epoch of technology' is far more than the control or

enslaving of man by technology. At its most basic level, technology is an understanding of

reality, of what it means for something to be real, to exist. The epoch of technology, therefore,

manifests a specific way of understanding and interpreting the world, machination, just as *das*

Man manifested what Heidegger called the public understanding of the world. Machination, as

technology's mode of understanding, is thus what Heidegger calls a "swaying of being," which is

just to say a way in which the Being of beings is grasped, a way of understanding the basic

nature of reality.[185] In the epoch of technology, the dominant understanding of reality is largely

encompassed by the term 'calculability,' meaning that everything that is real is understood in

terms of discrete, calculable, orderable units, of what can be produced or used for production:

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[184] 'Technology' and its related terminology make no appearance in "The Origin of the Work of Art," though that does not mean, as will be seen, that elements of the account of technology make no such appearance. As will become more and more clear, after *Being and Time* Heidegger rarely feels constrained by a single set of terms throughout his works.
[185] *Mindfulness* 152.

"machination fosters in advance the completely surveyable calculability of the subjugating empowering of beings to an accessible arrangement."[186] Leaving subjugation and power aside for a moment, machination fosters in advance a particular understanding of beings such that they are accessible because calculable. Access to beings is defined by calculability; to grasp what a being *is*, one must be able to understand it in a calculable manner. Reality is organized, ordered, something counted and assembled from parts.

To make 'calculability' and thus the nature of technology clearer, one might compare it to a non-technological, non-calculable understanding of reality. Take, for instance, Plato's understanding of reality. Plato held that the particular physical entities we sense are in some some sense instantiations of Forms, which are non-physical universal entities, and that sensible particulars derive their existence as well as their nature from their relationship to those Forms. The particulars of Platonic metaphysics are not important here. What is important is that what any particular thing in the world *is*, and so the key to understanding what a thing is, is in understanding how that thing is related to a higher universal accessible not through the senses, but through the mind alone; the mind knows the true Form, and there is no true sensory knowledge, properly speaking. A beautiful flower, for instance, is not beautiful because of physical facts about its smell, its colors, or the arrangement of its atoms (Democritean or otherwise). The flower is beautiful because it is somehow an instance or derivative of a perfect, intellectually grasped Form of Beauty. The intellectual realm is not just what makes the flower look pretty; it is what gives the flower the reality it has *qua* beautiful thing. The intellectually grasped Forms are what give things the existence as well as the features that they have. The Platonic understanding of the world is, in brief, of a physical, sensible reality that is derivative and an intellectual reality in virtue of which the physical reality has its existence and meaning.

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[186] *Mindfulness* 12.

Compare the Platonic view to the modern view, exemplified for Heidegger in modern science and especially (mid-twentieth century) physics. For the average scientist, there is no higher intellectual reality that makes a flower appear beautiful, no Beauty from which a flower derives its beautiful appearance. But neither does the world as experienced quite explain the flower's beauty. The flower's pleasant appearance, for example, is understood at one level as the result of a complicated reaction between particular wavelengths of light in a particular pattern and receptors in our eyes (biology), which itself is understood in terms of more fundamental chemical reactions between atomic elements (chemistry), which in turn is understood at more and more fundamental levels until one arrives at something like interacting fields of electrical or other force (theoretical physics). The fields of force themselves have no color, much less beauty; rather, taking something as beautiful is describing the calculable relationships between the light and receptors, which is between particles, which is between fields of force. These relationships are then ultimately describable mathematically, through the methods of modern physics. What a flower's beauty is, and no less what a flower is, is fields (or perhaps something even more fundamental and abstract, as visible to our eyes as Plato's Forms) that stand in mathematically describable relationships. Biology, as the saying goes, is applied chemistry, chemistry applied physics, and physics applied mathematics (and to finish the saying, mathematics applied logic; Heidegger, not coincidentally, sees the epoch of technology as one in which logic has supremacy over the sciences, a view expressed in "What is Metaphysics?" and elsewhere). Thus, a flower's beauty is fundamentally something ordered in accord with specific, describable, calculable relations. Calculability is taking reality to be, at its most basic level, the precise (here, mathematical) relationships that describe the world.

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For Heidegger, an understanding of the way the world is comes with a view to how one should act in it (an understanding of what one's possibilities are, to reach back to *Being and Time*), and so with the different understandings come different ways of interacting with the world. For the Platonist, the physical world is less important than the world of the intellect, and we should treat it accordingly: "He will do this ["grasp . . . the reality of all other things, that which each of them essentially is"] most perfectly who approaches the object with thought alone . . . , freeing himself as far as possible from eyes and ears, and in a word, from the whole body." (Pl. *Phaedo* 65d-66a)[187] The physical world of sense is the derivative, and thus impure, world, so "those who practice philosophy in the right way are in training for dying." (Pl. *Phaedo* 67e) Compare this to what the current state of science tells us about the world. There, the world is composed of calculable resources, resources that can be harnessed in accord with their properties; thus, "*Machination* means the accordance of everything with producibility," where the calculable is understood in terms of products, of the power that can be harnessed and the things that can be produced from it. Chemists extract fuel from crude oil, nuclear scientists extract power (whether for energy or destruction) from the atom, and so on. A river does not embody a Beauty that should be contemplated, but is a reaction that can be harnessed as a source of power for specific purposes. For Plato, people are essentially intellectual beings tethered to physical bodies, which in turn influences how we relate to the world; today, we see ourselves as integrated collectives of chemicals that act in accord with mathematical relationships. In the modern epoch, reality is understood as that which is wholly describable by ordered, calculable relationships, relationships which can be exploited for the practical ends one is pursuing, ends which are in turn calculable in terms of maximum efficiency. Everything else that appears to exist is derivative of the calculable, just as everything physical for Plato is derivative of Forms.

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[187] Translations of Plato are from *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hacket, 1997).

The implications of calculability as an understanding of the world are far-reaching. Heidegger's claim about calculability isn't just about physical objects; it is a basic claim about our experience of reality itself, one that extends far beyond atoms and string theory. For this reason, the epoch of technology *should not* be understood as a product or result of modern physics; rather, modern physics (and with it the mathematical description of reality) is one, and not the only, result of the technological worldview, a worldview that equates reality, and with that meaning and value, with calculability. Under technology as an epoch and calculability as a form of understanding, *all* phenomena are interpreted in terms of how the phenomena in question can be ordered, organized, and made use of. Take art as an example. For Plato, works of art are visible entities that point to the higher intellectual Forms; anything, recall, that is beautiful is so only because it somehow instantiates the Form of Beauty. At its best, a specific work of art can act as a stepping stone, the first stage of the lover in *Symposium* who starts with a particular beautiful body and moves on to the love of all beautiful bodies, and from there by steps to "the Beautiful itself, absolute, pure, unmixed, not polluted by human flesh or colors or any other great nonsense of mortality." (Pl. *Symposium* 211d-e) Forms are thus an ontology that also explains what art can, and should, accomplish.

Calculability plays the same role as the Forms, but to very different effect. From the perspective of calculability,

> What art brings forth are "installations" (forms of *organizing* beings) . . . . Word, sound, and image are means for structuring, stirring, rousing and assembling of masses, in short, they are means of organizing . . . . "Motion picture" is the public installation of the "new" societal comportments, fashions, gestures, and "live-experience" of "actual" "lived-experiences."[188]

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[188] *Mindfulness* 24.

In the modern age, Heidegger thinks, art is not understood as being revelatory of anything beyond itself, whether that be the Form of Beauty or otherwise. Rather, art as it is understood today is about the organization of tastes, interests, and fashions, of the tangible effects it has on people; art is defined by its usefulness in pleasing the public, in appealing to particular tastes. Art is currently pop culture: it is not that people have forgotten how to paint or make music, but that paintings and songs are made as consumer goods, organized products for public consumption in accord with ordered categories of aesthetic experience; mainstream or subculture, popular or underground, local or cosmopolitan. The summer blockbuster, the profusion of kitsch and niche interests, and exhibitions of indigenous art in Western museums basically as novelties are all examples. "It is not films that are trashy," Heidegger says, "but what they offer as the consequence of machination of lived-experience and what they disseminate as worthy of live-experience."[189] ('Lived-experience' will be explained shortly.) The aim of art, in brief, is the "organizing the public life of the masses" according to calculable categories for the purpose of usefulness.[190] Art as calculability, then, is not (or not merely) art in terms of mathematical physics. Art as calculability is art understood fundamentally in terms of delimited categories that are themselves grasped in a calculable way; ordered calculation of discrete entities for use and production is the common thread that physics and art share in the epoch of technology.

Given, as noted above, that the purpose of art in the epoch of technology is to organize the life of the masses and their interests, one can guess that human life itself, how we understand our lives and how we think those lives should be lived, is not free of calculability. In the epoch of technology man is defined as subject. As Heidegger understands it, subjectivism is man's

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[189] *Mindfulness* 24. So Heidegger may be a Luddite, but not a *total* Luddite; his understanding of the modern era, and whether we should regard it positively or negatively, is more complex than it often appears. See, as an example, his "Memorial Address."
[190] Ibid.

understanding of himself as "*that* being from, and in view of which, all beings are "explained" in their beingness."[191] As subject, man is the being that identifies what other beings are, and in so doing makes available for production what is of use in them; man identifies the true nature of atoms and so can harness their power, identifies the true nature of a river and so can harness its power, identifies what is beautiful and how it can be used to sell more expensive clothes. Man as calculating being thus has power over objects, which are the things that are perceived by the subject. But at the same time man, as one being among others, is also part of the universe of calculable objects, and understood as such: "Man, the *forgotten* subject, belongs to the 'whole' of the "objective" beings and is within this 'whole' merely a fleeting speck of dust."[192] An epochal understanding of reality, such as that of technology, does not interpret objects in isolation from the subject, for Heidegger. What it is to exist, according to the epoch of technology, is to be calculable; the world is understood as calculable, goals and purposes are understood in terms of calculability and producibility, i.e., as discrete entities consisting of potential forces that can be harnessed for ends; one can almost see a Marxist notion of value in terms of labor-hours here. Just as Plato's Forms lead to a particular way of comporting towards the world, the epoch of technology will lead to a particular way of regarding human experience. Since calculability grasps the world as consisting things to be harnessed for ordered, calculated use, human life in the world becomes understood as something that is ordered and calculated in the same way; the aim of human life becomes the maximization of output.

The upshot is that human life becomes a collecting of "*lived experience*" as what gives to man "the *appearance* of self-assertion vis-à-vis beings,"[193] the illusion of having power and control over one's life. To understand what is meant by 'lived experience,' think of the modern

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[191] *Mindfulness* 138.
[192] Ibid.
[193] *Mindfulness* 13.

family vacation. Rather than being a time of rest and relaxation, a modern vacation is usually centered on a trip somewhere, the goal of which is to have as many good experiences as possible. One goes to Disney World and experiences as many rides as one can, or one tries to visit all of the great national monuments. One goes sky diving or rock climbing simply for the experience of having done so. The idea of a vacation is, Heidegger would say, cheapened and simplified to a collection of experiences (epitomized by vacation photographs, which are representational stand-ins for experience; Heidegger would likely have a lot to say about our growing tendency to constantly photograph our experiences and put them on social media for public display). Experience becomes something acquired, collected, amassed; amount and variety of experiences becomes a stand-in for any other form of value. For this reason, technology is also referred to as "man's massive way of being,"[194] emphasizing the scale and quantitative perspective, and 'live-experience' as "the heightening of expanse and quickness, of affordability and publicness,"[195] emphasizing convenience and reach, on making everything possible. Technology, through calculation as a way of understanding the world, thus overpowers man, defining him and telling him what his life means, how life should be lived, without regard for the curves and fine details of human life; rather, life becomes what one has accomplished, what one can do, what power one has; it becomes a calculable, discrete list of things one has done.

The understanding of the world engendered by the epoch of technology has further consequences. As previously hinted at, the possession of power is an essential aspect of the technological epoch. Man is set against beings as their master and possessor, controlling resources for his own use; machination is thus a form of "coercive force."[196] Coercion, assertion, and power are central to Heidegger's view of technology, and are influenced by Heidegger's

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[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] *Mindfulness* 12.

reading of Nietzsche, a thorough exposition of which is beyond the scope of this study. In brief,

Heidegger adopts Nietzsche's concept of the will to power, taking it to be a final step in

revealing the modern era as one of power and control, of harnessing nature and oneself in the

service of greater power and control. The technological worldview is described consistently as

destructive, coercive, and forceful, such that "its own overpowering of itself necessarily includes

commanding everything to subjugation that finds itself in the sphere of disposal of power."[197]

But because technology asserts control over man's view of himself as well as his view of

objects, man is swept up into the process of control, stripped of genuine power to question

technology itself. The result is blindness towards anything but accumulating more, "the

undermining of every possibility of a beginning on the basis of a completely bedazzled self-

seeking that lacks all measures and has become absolute."[198] Man is too busy chasing lived

experiences and being bedazzled by how much more he can do to ask about the worldview that

places absolute priority on such things. In this way, the epoch of technology leads man away

from inquiring into the origin of the epoch, of avoiding questions about the nature of the modern

understanding of the world and its foundations. Technology thus leads to a forgetting of the

historical sources that led to technology as the only possible way of understanding the world,

something Heidegger calls a 'decision':

> such a grasping ["of the sway of power . . . as a form of self-mastery"] can take place only in
> a deciding, through which one side of machination as such and, along with it, machination in
> its unconcealed sway in general, first comes to a halt. However, every sway of power and
> every power-possessing being is in itself an evasion of such decisions.[199]

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[197] *Mindfulness* 14.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.

The epoch of technology includes a failure to even question whether it itself is anything but correct, and so man is rendered incapable of seeing the epoch of technology and what comes with it as problematic. The epoch of technology avoids confronting its own foundations, confronting the sway of be-ing that allowed technology to take precedence in the first place. The end result is that technology "blocks and finally undermines all decision"[200] about man's historical situation (where 'situation' is being used in a general sense here), on what to make of the epoch itself and whether to challenge it.

While the terminology is much more rhetorically aggressive than that in *Being and Time*, and is generally keyed into one specific epoch in history, (1) the tendency of technology to take its own form of explanation as absolute, (2) its orderly, universalized, and uninquisitive manner of explanation of the world, (3) the illusion it provides of control and the substitution of genuine experience for, in *Being and Time*'s words, "the guarantee of a 'life' which, supposedly, is genuinely 'lively',"[201] (4) the resulting avoidance of questioning the historical foundations of man's situation and thus (5) the inability to come to any decisions that would arise therefrom draw consistent analogies to *Being and Time*'s discussion of *das Man* and what about *das Man* led Dasein in *Being and Time* towards inauthenticity. *Das Man*, recall, provided simple answers that were to be taken as obvious and beyond question (satisfying point 1). It explained the world and one's possibilities simply, in terms of 'what one does' in the established way of living, thereby promoting inauthenticity rather than pursuing to the utmost one's true possibilities (point 2). *Das Man* thus allowed Dasein to think it had control over what it wanted, to think it was doing the right thing, when in truth Dasein's possibilities are always unsettled and never fully within its control (3). Because Dasein's true possibilities must come from its historical situation,

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[200] *Mindfulness* 12.
[201] *Being and Time* 217.

Das Man's form of understanding failed to acknowledge Dasein's true historical possibilities (4); thus, when resolute, Dasein "has chosen itself;"[202] it has prepared itself to acknowledge and move forward in its genuine historical possibilities, unlike the *Manselbst* (5). The epoch of technology plays not just a similar role in *Mindfulness* to the role *das Man* plays in *Being and Time* when it comes to promoting inauthenticity; the two operate identically.

Despite the strong similarities that manifest on a close reading, there appears to be at least one very important difference between the concepts of *das Man* and technology: technology, as Heidegger understands it, is not a timeless phenomenon that always has the same structure. Rather, it is the *epoch* of technology; Heidegger appears to be unambiguous talking about the modern era alone: "*Modern* technicity," Heidegger says, "arises out of [a] foundational but at the same time concealed fostering."[203] Notice not only that it is modern technology that is the point of interest, but also that it arises out of a "foundational" fostering, which appears to imply that there was some previous historical occurrence or set of occurrences that led to what is today the epoch of technology. Technology, according to this passage and in line with the constant use of the term 'epoch,' appears to be a historical phenomenon in a way that inauthenticity does not— while in *Being and Time* inauthenticity was certainly Dasein's state at particular times and places in history, technology appears to be a form of human understanding that arises specifically in the modern era, from specific historical events. Inauthenticity and *das Man*, by and large, seem to fade away as basic, persistent parts of Dasein's existence, replaced by a specific historical phenomenon; one might then infer, accordingly, that the concept of authenticity has somehow changed in a similar way. Zimmerman, following this view, says of *Being and Time* that "At this stage in his thinking, Heidegger was not yet aware of the fact that the possibility of owned

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[202] *Being and Time* 334.
[203] *Mindfulness* 12-3. (Emphasis mine.)

existence lies *not* on the site of Dasein, but within a certain phase of the history of Being."[204] For

Being and Time-era Heidegger, on Zimmerman's reading, whether Dasein is authentic or not

depends on what Dasein does.For the later Heidegger it depends on what sort of character the

contemporary epoch has: is it one of technology, or a more authentic epoch? "Certainly," Haar

says of the later Heidegger, "the fundamental choices in terms of which an epoch orders itself are

simple and few. But are they still choices, decisions (*Entscheidungen*) *freely made by man . . .* ?

Errancy is not a fault of man,"[205] because the epoch decides whether man will be in errancy or

not: man, on Haar's reading of the later Heidegger, "can escape neither errancy, nor forgetting,

which is itself forgotten." [206]

Heidegger certainly refers to the modern era specifically when he discusses technology

and calculation in works such as *Mindfulness*. But if authenticity and inauthenticity depend

entirely on the character of the epoch, if they are entirely historical circumstances that either

obtain or don't, then if there were an authentic epoch it would be impossible to be inauthentic in

it, just as it appears (according to Haar and Zimmerman) that the possibility of authenticity

depends on the era. Is that Heidegger's view in *Mindfulness*?

Look back to *Being and Time*. Inauthenticity appears to be described in a way that

doesn't limit it to just one epoch, but exactly how? In what sense, given Heidegger's conceptual

framework, is inauthenticity not specifically a historical phenomenon? In *Being and Time*

Heidegger says that Dasein is inauthentic, or "everyday" Dasein, "proximally and for the most

part." That seems to imply that there are general features of inauthenticity which operate in the

same way throughout history. However, Heidegger never draws out that implication explicitly

even once in *Being and Time*, and the only seemingly clear evidence is the use of these two

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[204] Zimmerman 105.
[205] Haar 126.
[206] Ibid.

expressions. Throughout *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes inauthenticity without actually

saying anything about its historicality or lack thereof; perhaps such an omission is unhelpful, but

it is the state of the text. That in mind, one can read the two expressions 'everyday' and

'proximally and for the most part' in at least two ways: ahistorically, as referring to 'everyday'

Dasein throughout 'the most part' of its history, or as referring to what everyday Dasein is like in

a particular circumstance, what is 'everyday' for a specific place and time. "For the most part,

Dasein is inauthentic" is understandable in either sense, so the use of such expressions without

further elaboration does not on its own make a case.

   In fact, one can find some evidence, albeit inconclusive evidence, for the view that

inauthenticity *is* tied to a specific historical period in *Being and Time*. In particular, one can cite

the instances in *Being and Time* where Heidegger describes specific examples of inauthenticity

and of misinterpretations in philosophy. His examples of inauthenticity in particular trend

towards the contemporary, and certainly are historical in the sense of being comprehensible only

in terms of specific historical circumstances. For example, Heidegger says in his initial

discussion of *das Man* that

> In utilizing public means of transport and in making use of information services such as the
> newspaper, every Other is like the next . . . . We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they*
> [*man*] take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge;
> likewise we shrink back from the 'great mass' as *they* shrink back; we find 'shocking' what
> *they* find shocking."[207]

Public transportation and newspapers are anything but timeless features of human life. In this

instance, at least, inauthenticity is expressed in a particular historical moment, which turns out to

be the same moment that becomes known as the epoch of technology in *Mindfulness*. One

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[207] *Being and Time* 164.

example does not constitute a proof, of course, but it is far from the only example. The general

sense of excessive speed in the same discussion of idle talk, of the drifting about of idle curiosity

from one interest to the next[208] and the rush to make trends out of date through ambiguity[209]

appear in a way that suggests particularly contemporary concerns.

One might say in response that contemporary examples make for livelier examples, and

that using such examples is just a way to connect with the readership, not making an implicit

point. This could be true, but one should look to the broader interpretive concerns that animate

Being and Time itself. Heidegger's concerns about the understanding of Being are not merely

about inauthenticity as such, but about a specific type of misinterpretation that, he thinks, has a

specific history. For instance, the guiding concern that opens the treatise itself, the neglect of the

question of Being, is described as an issue of contemporary concern with historical origins: "*a

dogma has been developed* which not only declares the question about the meaning of Being to

be superfluous, but sanctions its complete neglect."[210] This neglect seems not to be presented as

an atemporal fact. When Heidegger speaks of method, his discussion of the sciences, both

broadly speaking and on their relation to the project of fundamental ontology, is far from

unhistorical, including Heidegger's persistent concern over the confusion of the analysis of

Dasein for contemporary anthropology.[211] The following passage, in the section titled "The Task

of Destroying the History of Ontology," brings what seems to be an ambiguity of Heidegger's

view into relief:

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[208] *Being and Time* 216.
[209] *Being and Time* 218.
[210] *Being and Time* 21 (emphasis mine).
[211] *Being and Time* 29-30 describe Heidegger's view of the status of the sciences at his time in general; for an example of anthropology in particular see *Being and Time* 74, where Heidegger explains what he thinks to be the historical foundations of traditional anthropology and the problems they present.

> When tradition thus becomes master, it does so in such a way that what it 'transmits' is made so inaccessible, proximally and for the most part, that it rather becomes concealed . . . . Dasein has had its historicality so thoroughly uprooted by tradition that it confines its interest to the multiformity of possible types, directions, and standpoints of philosophical activity in the most exotic and alien of cultures; and by this very interest it seeks to veil the fact that it has no ground of its own to stand on.[212]

On the one hand, 'tradition' is identified as what obscures Dasein's understanding. Heidegger does not seem to be referring to a specific tradition, but to tradition itself. However, the next passage refers to specific problems with what Heidegger takes to be the current historical situation. It is not simply that tradition does something wrong and must be overcome in general (that would make no sense, given that authenticity is tied to tradition), but that a specific tradition has manifested the neglect of Being; there is nothing inevitable about confining one's "interest to the multiformity of possible types, directions, and standpoints of philosophical activity in the most exotic and alien of cultures." What, then, is the sense of 'tradition' at work here? Tradition itself, as a steady influence in Dasein's existence, or one specific tradition and what it has done?

The answer is, "Yes." The ambiguity in this passage is only apparent, and is explained a few paragraphs before. "The ownmost meaning of Being which belongs to the inquiry into Being as an historical inquiry, gives us the assignment [*Anweisung*] of inquiring into the history of that inquiry itself, that is, of becoming historiological."[213] Any inquiry into Being is historical, because Dasein is fundamentally a historical being. Thus, any discussion of Dasein cannot only be a discussion of Dasein in the abstract, but must be understood to apply to Dasein as having an actual, lived history. Dasein is historical, so any relation to tradition it has is a relation to a particular tradition. The discussion of inauthenticity in *Being and Time* may not be *ahistorical*, which would mean that the account has no reliance on history, but rather *transhistorical*; that is,

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[212] *Being and Time* 43.
[213] *Being and Time* 42.

inauthenticity may have general features that transcend historical periods, but those features only have any substance when they are given specific historical content. In other words, inauthenticity is not nothing, but it is an empty concept without historical manifestation, and of course those historical manifestations will not always be the exact same. Ahistoricality assumes that *das Man*, for instance, is some existing structure that is exactly the same whenever it manifests; transhistoricality assumes only that it can manifest across multiple time periods, but allows for difference in how that manifestation occurs. On a transhistoricality reading, there may be some very broad features that inauthenticity shares across epochs, but those features are only comprehensible, and only have any sort of existence, when manifested in some particular form (it's like the difference between a Platonic Form and an Aristotelian form; more is said on this point in the Conclusion); those features don't belong to a free-standing structure,[214] and so one cannot talk about inauthenticity *an sich*, so to speak.

But, one may object, *das Man* is still being understood in *Being and Time* as some sort of structure that exists across historical periods, and that is enough to show a significant difference from Heidegger's position in *Mindfulness*. Two further points can be made, one from the direction of *Being and Time* and one from the direction of Heidegger in the 1930s, which press firmly against this objection. First, a brief paragraph in *Being and Time*'s initial discussion of *das*

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[214] Think here of Braver's and Dreyfus' contention that anxiety leaves Dasein free of all content, or what is the same, renders all possibilities meaningless. As I have argued in Chapter Two, that is literally impossible for Heidegger. Dasein's essence is existence; because Dasein is Being-in-the-world, there is something like a structure or essence of Dasein only insofar as Dasein concretely exists and has concrete possibilities. It wouldn't be entirely inappropriate, as the text above suggests, to think by analogy to Aristotelian hylomorphism here. If anxiety removed all possibilities from Dasein, Dasein would cease to be, period. Braver is thus simply mistaken in saying that anxiety leaves only Dasein's structures. Dreyfus is more on track, noting that Heidegger says in "What is Metaphysics?" that "At bottom therefore it is not as though "you" or "I" feel uncanny; rather, it is this way for some "one."" (*Pathmarks* 89) But this, again, is due to the unsettling of Dasein's possibilities, wherein the self becomes equally unsettled. Dasein does not cease to be; anxiety is not death. For "In the clear night of the nothing of anxiety the original openness of beings as such arises: that they are beings – and not nothing." (*Pathmarks* 90) And following that, "Only on the ground of the original manifestness of the nothing can human Dasein approach and penetrate beings." (*Pathmarks* 91) It would be strange if the condition in which Dasein totally ceases to exist, or is totally severed from the world and thus from beings, were the very condition necessary for Dasein to experience beings at all.

Man provides a more direct, though unelaborated, view into the relationship between *das Man* and history. Heidegger opens the paragraph by saying that *das Man* is not just something out and apart from Dasein, but is in fact part of Dasein's existential constitution, a part of Dasein's very structure whenever it exists. So far, this is compatible with *das Man* being read as either ahistorical or transhistorical. However, Heidegger adds in a key passage that *das Man* "has, in turn, various possibilities of becoming concrete as something characteristic of Dasein [*seiner daseinsmassigen Konkretion*]. The extent to which its dominion becomes compelling and explicit may change in the course of history."[215] Notice that here in *Being and Time* itself, Heidegger is saying that, given *das Man* is part of Dasein's constitution, *das Man* can become part of Dasein's worldv in different ways through history, possessing different levels of control over Dasein's understanding. Heidegger does not go on to say what determines the extent of *das Man*'s control in a given historical period, but what is important is that the way in which *das Man* manifests is not always the same, and that *das Man* is not simply experienced in the same way by all Daseins throughout history. The role of *das Man* changes with history itself; *das Man*'s control, and so inauthenticity, is not and cannot be ahistorical; it must be transhistorical.

As a note, if one grants that *Being and Time*'s account of inauthenticity (and much more, presumably, that goes beyond the scope of this study) transhistorical, a different interpretation of the change from *Being and Time* to the later works opens up. If inauthenticity can only exist as something that manifests concretely in history, then perhaps the change after *Being and Time* is not the *replacing* of inauthenticity by a particular historical phenomenon. It may instead be the result of a different sort of shift, a shift in emphasis or focus from a conceptual discussion of structural features, putting aside their manifestations in historical circumstances (talking of tradition, inauthenticity, and *das Man* in general, for instance, without using any historical

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[215] *Being and Time* 167.

qualifiers) to specific historical descriptions, to talk of a particular manifestation of these

structures. Speaking in neutral terms about inauthenticity and the like does indeed make them

sound ahistorical, and seems to push against Heidegger's own view (or so I have argued) that

these concepts only have meaning when manifested in concrete historical situations; perhaps,

then, one solution for Heidegger would be to drop the neutral, conceptual language and speak

directly of concrete historical situations. Thus, Heidegger may have decided that, instead of

describing inauthenticity as a general phenomenon, he will focus specifically on its current

manifestation in the epoch of technology. I will argue in the Conclusion that this is exactly what

is going on, though the evidence thus far presented does not provide a full case for it, and a truly

complete discussion of that question would consume a dissertation all its own.

Returning to the narrower question, whether there was a shift of content from

inauthenticity's being constituted by transhistorical structures to it being constituted by historical

phenomena, the ultimate answer to this question appears in Chapter 4 of this study. At the

moment, however, I can offer, as the second point, a passage from the 1930s which presages that

later solution. In 1935's "On the Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger considers the different

interpretations of what a thing in general is that have appeared throughout history. Perhaps a

thing, such as a jug, is a combination substance and accident? Perhaps form and matter? When

Heidegger gets to the medieval notion of thing as something created, a product of an uncreated

God, he notes that "The philosophy of ["the biblical," meaning Christian] faith can of course

assure us that all of God's creative work is to be thought of as different from the action of a

craftsman. "Nevertheless," he cautions,

> if at the same time or even beforehand, in accordance with a presumed predetermination of
> Thomistic philosophy for interpreting the Bible, the *ens creatum* is conceived as a unity of

materia and *forma*, then faith is expounded by way of a philosophy whose truth lies in an unconcealedness of beings which differs in kind from the world believed in by faith. The idea of creation, grounded in faith, can lose its guiding power of knowledge of beings as a whole. But the theological interpretation of all beings, the view of the world in terms of matter and form borrowed from an alien philosophy, having once been instituted, can still remain a force. This happens in the transition from the Middle Ages to modern times.[216]

The interpretation of createdness that defined the medieval era, Heidegger says in this lecture composed and edited shortly before *Mindfulness*, allowed man in that time to understand the physical world as having a unique status as the creation of God, an understanding that would have given the world a particular value and medieval Dasein a particular set of possibilities, a destiny. That understanding, however, was then distorted in a particular way, through the metaphysics of form and matter, which had repercussions later in history. A foreign notion of reality entered into the medieval worldview, leading it astray and dragging vestiges of it into the modern era. But that doesn't mean that the medieval understanding of the world was inherently corrupt and inauthentic; if it were, what sort of "guiding power of knowledge of beings," in Heidegger's words, would the notion of reality as God's creation have? An epoch, in this case the medieval epoch, appears to be not simply inauthentic or authentic; rather, there was an understanding of the world that could be illuminating (providing a guiding power) if grasped properly, but could also be distorting if brought under the sway of concepts foreign to it. In other words, there appears to be an authentic and inauthentic medieval worldview. If the different ways of grasping an epoch's understanding of Being can be distinguished along the lines of authenticity and inauthenticity, as appears reasonable here, then the conceptual machinery is available for a transhistorical reading of Heidegger's later works. In such a reading, inauthenticity may appear across historical epochs; however, the degree and style of that

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[216] Heidegger, Martin. "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Poetry Language Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) 29.

inauthenticity could vary greatly, just as the passage in *Being and Time* argues. *Being and Time* and the later work would thus be brought together in this key respect. While this route looks promising, the case for it is still somewhat embryonic, and more direct confirmation is desirable. A similar passage from "The Question Concerning Technology" will provide the needed confirmation much more clearly, but for now I want to emphasize that this reading is one to be taken seriously; a knockdown proof that there is no content change has not yet been adduced, but the grounds for one are present, and open up a genuine alternative view.

In conclusion, recall the strong *Kehre* thesis. One of its central claims is 'man is replaced by history.' One way in which that might be the case is if authenticity and inauthenticity as phenomena are no longer specific to the nature of people as such, but to historical periods as such—in *Being and Time*, this story would go, people are authentic or inauthentic based on whether their particular actions and understandings of the world are; in the later work, on the other hand, it is a historical epoch itself that is authentic or inauthentic, and people are basically along for the ride. The replacment of general talk of inauthenticity with talk of the epoch of technology appears, on the surface, to confirm this view. But, as I have argued, *Being and Time*'s account of inauthenticity is not an ahistorical phenomenon. Further, there is good reason to think that *Mindfulness* does not hold to a purely historical view of inauthenticity. Thus, there is reason to think that the two accounts are not so different, and that man is not simply replaced by history. Finishing this argument will require two more steps, however: One, finding stronger textual support for the idea that the later work is transhistorical, and two, showing how that textual support is in line with the evidence provided above from *Mindfulness*. That will appear in the next chapter, but for now I move forward to authenticity in *Mindfulness*.

3.2 BEING HISTORICALLY MINDED

Based on what was just said in the previous section, inauthenticity appears to have a place in *Mindfulness* similar to, perhaps identical to, its place in *Being and Time*. But that is only one half of the story. On the other side, when it comes to potentially overcoming the epoch of technology, Heidegger says that what is required is what he calls 'mindfulness.' What is mindfulness, and how does it relate to authenticity? There is little dispute that, on its surface, it focuses more on history than authenticity. But is its actual relation to historical possibilities the same as the relation I argued authenticity has to history in *Being and Time*? And is there a sort of activism in being mindful, similar to that in *Being and Time*, or has it gone totally passive, as some argue? As in the last chapter, I will start with a general discussion of mindfulness that will pave the way towards answering the question of history's role; the section after that will shift focus to activism and passivism.

First, what is mindfulness? As opposed to technology's forgetting of its own ground, "mindfulness means preparing the preparedness" for "taking over the distress of the grounding of the truth of be-ing – it is the beginning of a history that has no 'history'."[217] Mindfulness is a form of preparation, but in the sense of preparing a preparedness, or preparing a readiness for action; it is a priming or bracing oneself to act. Specifically, it is a preparing to take over "the distress of the grounding of the truth of be-ing." Heidegger frequently refers in *Mindfulness* to the epoch of technology as signified by a lack of distress—specifically, by a lack of concern for man's lostness in the epoch of technology. This lack of concern is what allows technology to spread its control, by becoming the only voice that offers an understanding of the world, one that shuts out all others—recall from the previous section that technology results in a "a completely

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[217] *Mindfulness* 17.

bedazzled self-seeking" in the search for lived-experience, where all possibilities of decision are undermined because not recognized. Mindfulness, as preparing the preparedness to do something (to make a decision in some way, presumably), must acknowledge the distressing nature of an era where no one recognizes that there is even a problem. Accordingly, mindfulness is a distress at the lack of distress over the epoch of technology; it becomes the "distress of the lack of distress wherein being's abandonment of beings becomes manifest."[218]

In the epoch of technology, recall, everything is interpreted through the lens of calculability, including human life and experience. Any other understanding of the being of beings is forgotten, left out, ignored. Heidegger refers to this in *Mindfulness* as the abandonment of beings by being, which reaches its nadir in the epoch of technology: "this groundless and ungraspable obtrusiveness of the undecided question of being that avoids every decision on distress itself originates from being's abandonment of beings and from the unbroken predominance of what is always simply "actual","[219] where actuality is another marker of calculability and so technology. That is to say, any awareness of being in general, as apart from particular manifested beings, is lost in the epoch technology, and furthermore, the situation is such that this very fact is invisible to people most of the time; everyone thinks that all is well and nothing is missing. Therefore, the first task of becoming mindful is to become aware of the overpowering and deceptive nature of technology, of the lostness of the question of Being that motivates *Being and Time* from the very first page: "it is fitting that we should raise anew *the*

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[218] *Mindfulness* 318.
[219] *Mindfulness* 309-10. This passage raises the question: if beings are 'abandoned by being,' does that mean that being is something like an intentional agent of some sort, a sort of God? This will be addressed in more depth in the section on activism and passivism, and especially in the discussion of mysticism in Chapter 4.

question of the meaning of Being. But are we nowadays even perplexed at our inability to understand the expression 'Being'? Not at all."[220]

How does such awareness come about? In a passage characteristic of the terminological rollercoaster that is the be-ing-historical treatises, Heidegger says that "be-ing can enown (*ereignet*, appropriate) its openness"—that is, a space of possibilities (openness) can be revealed beyond that found in the epoch of technology, one that is receptive to the appropriating event (*Ereignis*) of be-ing rather than being consumed with calculating and ordering beings—"only when, via a grounding-attunement that is attuned by be-ing, the post-metaphysical man who undertakes the groundership for this openness is sundered from all ensnarement by mere beings. This grounding-attunement is the attunement of the dismay that sets-free."[221] The operative term in this passage is 'grounding-attunement.' A grounding-attunement is a fundamental way of comporting towards the world, not in the sense of a feeling or behavior; it is "the "ground" of all comportments that thoroughly attunes them,"[222] it allows particular feelings and moods to take place at all, by opening up a sphere of involvement in which they can occur. Grounding-attunements thus shape and direct our attitudes towards the world, and in so doing opening up possibilities; they have, Heidegger says in *Mindfulness*, the character of *ereignet*, of appropriating man into the world—in short, a grounding-attunement is a particular manner of Being-in-the-world.

A grounding-attunement is a way in which the world is grasped, an *understanding* of the world in *Being and Time*'s sense of that term. The account of grounding-attunements closely follows that of mood in *Being and Time*. Mood, Heidegger says there, is not another word for feeling; it "*implies a disclosive submission to the world, out of which we can encounter*

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[220] *Being and Time* 19.
[221] *Mindfulness* 220-1.
[222] *Mindfulness* 284.

something that matters to us;"[223] it is finding the world to be in some particular way, which allows things to have meaningful significances in terms of Dasein's possibilities. Dismay as a grounding-attunement, which is the state that distress at the lack of distress places us in, draws obvious analogies to anxiety as a mood, and with good reason. In *Being and Time*, anxious Dasein experienced the world as not being settled and in its control, as oppressive and obtrusive insofar that it fails to offer straightforward, settled, unquestionable possibilities that Dasein can then pursue without worry. In *Mindfulness*, the grounding-attunement that frees man from technology's sway is dismay, which is a distress at the lack of distress over the lack of concern about being. The epoch of technology takes everything to be ordered and calculable, and so subject to man's control. But it is possible to question the epoch of technology, to ask whether the world can only be understood in that way. Dismay is what comes from recognizing that man has been taking his understanding of the world entirely from technology, an understanding that can be questioned as to its origins and its absoluteness, and challenged; perhaps, man realizes in dismay, the world is not simply this way, perhaps man is not in control. Dismayed man also recognizes that any possibilities outside of the simple orderability of technology are no longer even seen, that man is not even aware of, much less in control of, his own destiny. Dismay, Heidegger says in the passage quoted above, "sunders" modern man from beings as such (since beings are currently being understood via calculability and nothing else, any other awareness sunders man from the world he currently lives in), but at the same time it is a "dismay that sets-free," meaning that it sets us free from our enthrallment to particular beings: "the shared knowing-awareness must be inaugurated in those who mold their style out of the attunement that

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[223] *Being and Time* 177.

thoroughly attunes a dismay that sets-free from beings and bears and steers the displacement

unto the inquiry into the most question-worthy,"[224] i.e., unto be-ing.

While the term 'anxiety' never emerges in this discussion, the similarities are striking. It

is the task of mindfulness to see through the dominating technological understanding of the

world, a task that leads to distress. This distress pulls man out of his obsession with particular

beings and their supposedly set nature, as anxiety broke Dasein away from the straightforward

projects and goals given to it by *das Man*. Heidegger, in a passage in *Mindfulness* where he

reflects upon *Being and Time*, connects authenticity and distress directly: "*un-ownedness* [a

translation of *Un-eigentlichkeit*, the same term as *Being and Time's* 'inauthenticity'] . . . thought

"existentially" unto and out of the question of being, means lostness to *beings*, that is, means the

predominance of beings themselves and their overshadowing of being to such an extent that the

distress of the question concerning the truth of being has to stay away."[225] One might be inclined

to read this passage as Heidegger reading later concepts, in this case distress and the truth of

being, back into *Being and Time*, a charge Heidegger is frequently accused of.[226] Yet recall that,

in *Being and Time,* the question of Being "has today been forgotten,"[227] that Dasein spends much

of its time fallen from "Dasein *itself* as factical Being-in-the-world,"[228] that inauthentic Dasein is

described as being in a state of ""absorption in . . .""[229] the world of its concerns, an absorption

where an authentic understanding of the world is replaced "by what is present-at-hand within-

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[224] *Mindfulness* 216.

[225] *Mindfulness* 124.

[226] As when Blattner, for instance, says that "the later Heidegger neither is nor intends to be an exegete of *Being and Time*," (Blattner 306) or Braver casually refers to "one of [Heidegger's] more disingenuous rereadings of his early work," (Braver 283) since there are apparently enough such rereadings for there to be a scale of Heideggerian disingenuousness. More will be said on this topic in Chapter 4.

[227] *Being and Time* 21.

[228] *Being and Time* 220. It is important to emphasize that the flight from *oneself* is specifically from the self of "factical Being-in-the-world," lest the temptation to read individualism into the text once again arises.

[229] Ibid.

the-world, namely, Things;"[230] further, that this absorption "has mostly the character of Being-

lost in the publicness of [*das Man*],"[231] because such publicness "brings Dasein a *tranquility*, for

which everything is 'in the best of order' and all doors are open,"[232] and that "In this falling

Being-alongside" that is represented by tranquilizing inauthenticity, "fleeing from uncanniness

[i.e., from anxiety] announces itself."[233] The terms are not the same between *Being and Time* and

Mindfulness, but the content of the account is hardly new, and what emerges is a far cry from the

revisionist self-interpretation that some claim to find sprinkled throughout Heidegger's works.

Technology is an all-consuming understanding of the world in terms of calculability, the

overcoming of which starts with recognition of the lack of distress over technology's domination

and over the failure to look towards be-ing. If distress at the lack of distress takes the place of

anxiety, in what does the positive account of mindfulness consist? What is mindfulness like?

> The decision prepares itself as mindfulness of what is ownmost to the epoch that consists of
> the *completion of modernity* [i.e., the modern epoch] . . . . Necessitated and held within
> decision itself, mindfulness, as the originary onefold of that historical knowing-awareness
> and this inquiry, only prepares the decision . . . . But "metaphysics" [that is, the history of be-
> ing that resulted in the epoch of technology] . . . can be overcome only by a more inceptual
> questioning of metaphysics' ownmost question and by relegating metaphysics to its ownmost
> necessity . . . . Questioning more inceptually means, on the one hand, to raise to what is most
> question-worthy that which remained fundamentally unquestioned . . . on the other hand, to
> leap into the hitherto hidden history of be-ing and thereby to grasp history itself in the whole
> more foundationally than any kind of 'history'.[234]

Given the emphasis by interpreters on a supposed shift to history in Heidegger's later work, it is

not surprising to see that history plays a major role in the form of mindfulness of the current

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[230] *Being and Time* 168.
[231] *Being and Time* 220.
[232] *Being and Time* 222.
[233] *Being and Time* 295-6.
[234] *Mindfulness* 18-9.

epoch and of leaping into a hidden history. The question, however, is not whether history is emphasized more or spoken of more directly here than in *Being and Time*, but exactly what role history is playing in this passage and in Heidegger's thought more generally at this juncture, and how that differs from the (somewhat unclear, as discussed in the previous chapter) account of authentic historicity in *Being and Time*.

Mindfulness is presented in the passage above as preparing for a decision[235] concerning what is ownmost—not ownmost to an individual or group, says Heidegger, but to a particular historical epoch. In other words, mindfulness prepares to confront and determine what the central characteristic of the current epoch is, of what defines it and drives it forward. In practice, this preparation amounts to an awareness of the nature of technology that at the same time opens the possibility of deciding in favor of another beginning. This other beginning is not clearly defined, but is in contrast with the first beginning, that being the history of the West which begins with Greek philosophy[236] and leads to the current epoch of technology, the course of which Heidegger frequently refers to as 'the history of metaphysics' because, he thinks, the history of understandings of the world can be traced through the different metaphysical interpretations of be-ing. Mindfulness thus prepares for the advent of a way of thinking open to something other than technology (it can't, Heidegger says, initiate this way of thinking itself, a fact that will become important in the next section), for the possibility of a different foundation to history.

Mindfulness prepares for the decision by way of questioning. In particular, mindfulness is *inceptual* questioning, questioning after the inception of the current historical epoch, which means that mindfulness involves questioning about the history of be-ing itself, and specifically of

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[235] Specifically, for the decision to embrace a new, non-metaphysical (and thus non-technological) ground for history, and thus for historical decisions. Precisely who is doing such enacting, and how such decisions are enacted, will be discussed in the next section.
[236] See *Mindfulness* 91-3.

how technology became the dominant understanding of be-ing in the West. Such questioning

requires looking back into the sequence of decisions, which is to say the sequence of

understandings of be-ing, which founded the current epoch in which man lives, i.e., looking back

into history of metaphysics and what he calls the 'first beginning' that got it going. Such

questioning is itself the acting out of distress at the current era's lack of distress about being; it

is, in more ordinary terms, modern man asking about how the modern world became dominated

by technology and technological thinking, and marks the move towards a break from

technological dominion. This, Heidegger says, is all that mindfulness can do: prepare the way for

a new beginning by questioning the history that led to man's current situation, prepare for a

decision by recognizing why the present is as it is, recognizing that the current understanding of

the world is not the only possible one, and not the perfect one. From there, man is prepared "to

raise to what is most question-worthy that which remained fundamentally unquestioned."

Look back once more to the very first page of *Being and Time*. "[I]t is fitting that we

should raise anew *the question of the meaning of Being* . . . . [F]irst of all we must reawaken an

understanding for the meaning of this question. Our aim in the following treatise is to work out

the question of the meaning of *Being* and to do so concretely."[237] Heidegger says that the aim of

Being and Time is not to say *what* the meaning of Being is, but to raise the *question* of the

meaning of Being; that is, to present what we mean by the word 'being' as something to be

questioned. This is necessary, Heidegger says, because the question has been forgotten, since "a

dogma has been developed"[238] which either declares the most fundamental ontological question

to be pointless, or ignores it entirely. *Being and Time* aims to overcome that dogma, first,

through an analysis of that being that can ask about Being: Dasein. And what is discovered in the

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[237] *Being and Time* 19.
[238] *Being and Time* 21.

course of that analysis? That Dasein grasps itself as a whole, which is to say it grasps itself in terms of its Being rather than some particular thing, concept, or feature of it, in authenticity, which was described above as Dasein's reckoning with its historically-shaped world. Recall that because Dasein's Situation includes not only its death, but its birth as well, authentic Dasein must pass down to itself its heritage, where this is something like (remembering that this part of *Being and Time* left much unexplained) its facticity. This results in a repetition of one's heritage in some way, but not in a way that suggests we all become professional re-enactors: "The repeating of that which is possible does not bring again [*Wiederbringen*] something that is 'past', nor does it bind the 'Present' back to that which has already been 'outstripped'."[239] Rather than simply binding itself to the past, authentic Dasein makes some sort of rejoinder or response to its heritage. Of course, Dasein is historical and has a tradition as long as it exists, so this rejoinder isn't going to be a breaking free of history. Nonetheless, authenticity requires a response to the past that has shaped the present.

Turn back now to the introductory chapters to *Being and Time*, where the plan for the whole work is set out. The initial analysis of Dasein, which reveals that "the inquiry into Being . . . is itself characterized by historicality,"[240] was meant onto to be the first half of the work. The second half of the work was to be constituted by the never-completed destruction of the history of ontology. Why is this necessary? Because, given the results of the first half of *Being and Time* (which were to include the third, unfinished division, "Time and Being"), the role of history in understanding the meaning of Being becomes undeniable. Dasein is that being which has an understanding of Being. But Dasein is also necessarily historical. Given this fact,

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[239] *Being and Time* 437.
[240] *Being and Time* 42.

if by such inquiry [Dasein's] eyes have been opened to its own essential historicality, then one cannot fail to see that the inquiry into Being (the ontico-ontological necessity of which we have already indicated) is itself characterized by historicality. The ownmost meaning of Being which belongs to the inquiry into Being as an historical inquiry, gives us the assignment [*Anweisung*] of inquiring into the history of that inquiry itself, that is, of becoming historiological. In working out the question of Being, we must heed this assignment, so that by positively making the past our own, we may bring ourselves into full possession of the ownmost possibilities of such inquiry. [241]

Asking about the meaning of Being, which is the stated aim of *Being and Time*, is not simply a formal philosophical exercise. Given what Dasein is by definition, such questioning can only take place as an inquiry into the history of the understanding of Being, i.e., an inquiry into the history of metaphysics. The second half of *Being and Time*, where Heidegger intended to discuss in reverse historical order Kant, Descartes, and Aristotle, was not meant to be merely an exercise in the history of philosophy, or a way to drive in the nail after he had made his substantive arguments in the first half; it was, Heidegger says here, the primary directive of the first half of the work. With the engagement with history, he concludes, "by positively making the past our own, we may bring ourselves into full possession of the ownmost possibilities of such inquiry."

A direct comparison of mindfulness with authentic historicity is difficult in virtue of the fact that Heidegger's account of authentic historicity in *Being and Time* remains somewhat inchoate. But if we recall that authentic Dasein reckons with its tradition by making a rejoinder that grasps and at the same time moves beyond it, and we put that next to Heidegger's comments in the Introduction to *Being and Time* about the relationship between ontology and the history of metaphysics, a purpose emerges. *Being and Time* itself appears to be meant by Heidegger as a move towards an authentic engagement with the heritage of the West, which means, the Introduction to *Being and Time* tells us, the history of metaphysics, i.e., the history of the

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[241] Ibid.

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understandings of Being that have emerged in the West. The aim of the second half of *Being and Time* was to be a critical engagement with the history of metaphysics as what has shaped how Being, and with it beings, are understood in the modern world. In other words, the aim of *Being and Time* is exactly to execute the critique of technology as the end result of the history of Western metaphysics that is being carried out in *Mindfulness*. In *Mindfulness*, mindfulness itself is described as a critical, aware engagement with the history of Western history through its understandings of be-ing. Insofar as *Being and Time* has as clear picture of authentic historicity at all, it is what mindfulness is meant to be in practice. Not only are both authenticity and mindfulness oriented towards history; they relate to history in the very same way.

Of course, as any reader of *Being and Time* and *Mindfulness* could say, Heidegger is not saying these things in the same way in both works. Though technology and mindfulness take the place and the content of inauthenticity and authenticity, the former terms are used by Heidegger in very different ways than the latter. The frame of discussion is now undisputedly presented as that of the modern period, and the description of authenticity is put exclusively in terms of the tasks contemporary man faces. Man's problems are presented unambiguously as historical problems, their solution involving a specific engagement with history. On the other hand, what in that account actually marks a break from the interpretation of *Being and Time* offered in the previous chapter, one that was argued for independently of anything from Heidegger's post-1930 works? Technology and calculability, when applied to human experience and social life, amounts to a recapitulation of *das Man*, publicness, and inauthenticity in terms of the current historical epoch. The role of anxiety and the authentic response to history reappear in the account of mindfulness. And again, recall that when Heidegger used concrete examples for *das Man's* influence in *Being and Time*, he used newspapers, public transportation, and the rapid,

ambiguous nature of trends and gossip as his leading examples. Even though it's not made explicit, there is good reason to think that Heidegger was already taking at a particularly contemporary perspective while describing authenticity and inauthenticity in *Being and Time*, a perspective matches both broadly and in its details with the account given in *Mindfulness*.

Think once again of the strong *Kehre* reading. According to those most who hold it, whereas in *Being and Time* authenticity is about stepping away from socio-historical forces and finding one's true, independent self, in the later work the equivalent to authenticity is reversed, becoming a turn towards history rather than away from it, from the individual rather than towards it. Based on what has been said thus far, the progression from calculability to mindfulness in *Mindfulness* is virtually identical to what occurs in *Being and Time*, and, keeping in mind points of obscurity in *Being and Time*'s account of authentic historicity, there is no evidence of a major shift in the account of mindfulness itself, either. If the question at hand is whether Heidegger's understanding of inauthenticity, authenticity, or the shift from one to other changes, the answer thus far, I have argued, is no. The frame of the discussion may have changed, but the account itself has not.

3.3 UNDERGOING A GOING-UNDER

Mindful man's relation to history, it has been said, is not different from authentic Dasein's relation to history. But what of activity and passivity? The discussion so far has presented many hints that a deeply passive view pervades *Mindfulness*. I will start by elaborating in more detail those hints, and from there provide a general picture of the apparent passivity of mindfulness. The question, as before, is how that view squares with what was uncovered in

Being and Time, particular in light of the three different types of activism (and, more to our interest here, the corresponding forms of passivism) discussed in Chapter 1. It will turn out that, while on the surface things may appear very differently, a closer examination shows that, again, the content stays the same.

Technology, as discussed earlier, is closely associated with power in the form of control. Recall that calculation, as technology's form of understanding, is a way of asserting control over beings by manipulating their discretely ordered elements for human use, an activity that extends to human life itself in the form of 'lived-experience.' Through grasping reality as calculable, modern man takes himself to be master of it, though modern man is himself mastered by technology as a form of understanding: "machination expands its sway as coercive force. By securing power, this coercive force develops as the immediately eruptible and always transformable capability for subjugation that knows no discretion, and supersedes itself as it spreads."[242] In opposition to calculation, mindfulness can be fairly presumed to be opposed to control and assertion, a presumption that is easily confirmed. Heidegger discusses control and power, and how they relate to mindfulness, repeatedly and at length in *Mindfulness*. Mindfulness must be "exempt from all the power of the effective,"[243] where an emphasis on being effective is the mark of technological assertiveness. The aim of mindfulness, as opposed to calculation, is not to enact anything at all, "neither to communicate a knowledge, nor to set up a doctrine."[244] Be-ing, the object of mindful thought, has no connection whatsoever to power relationships: "power-character is basically foreign to the sway of be-ing,"[245] which isn't to say that be-ing is itself power*less*, but that it has a different sort of character altogether. Relations of dominance

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[242] *Mindfulness* 12.
[243] *Mindfulness* 17.
[244] *Mindfulness* 41.
[245] *Mindfulness* 170.

and submission, master and slave, control and assertion, are totally foreign to mindfulness as a way of understanding and be-ing as what determines the nature of reality. From this, one might infer with some justification that mindfulness, in opposition to technology's constant assertiveness and struggle, is a fundamentally passive phenomenon. Mindful man does not take charge of his possibilities, because taking charge would be just the sort of concept associated with technology. Man doesn't assert what he will do with his life, but rather embraces be-ing in an open and unassertive manner.

Perhaps more significant, and subject to more explicit discussion in the literature, is a seeming reversal between the role of man and the role of be-ing as compared to *Being and Time*. Whatever might be said of *Being and Time*, in later works, including *Mindfulness*, it is now unambiguously be-ing that is the source of man's choices. For while be-ing is beyond power and powerless, that does not seem to mean that it does nothing at all. Quite the opposite:

> However, the experience to be mindful of is this: only on the basis of allotedness unto the truth of be-ing can man determine 'beings in the whole' and himself as the being that he is. Considering man's ownmost ground, be-ing itself has to have 'owned' man 'over' unto the truth of being. This en-owning alone yields that clearing wherein 'beings in the whole' and man can encounter each other in order to assess their remoteness.[246]

Man has to be *ereignen*, owned over or appropriated by be-ing. A clearing is an open space, meaning a space of possibilities. Man cannot determine his nearness or remoteness to be-ing, which is to say the overall quality of his relationship to beings generally, i.e., his degree of authenticity or inauthenticity, without such an en-owning on the part of be-ing. It is be-ing, in other words, which opens the space wherein man can encounter a world of possibilities in a particular way, and thus fall short or not fall short of it. Man does not assert his possibilities in

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[246] *Mindfulness* 131.

the sense of generating them: his basic understanding of the world, his 'grounding-experience' in the language of *Mindfulness*, is "not "*enacted*" in the sense that the "individuals" would invent it, concoct it or assemble it from isolated pieces. Rather, grounding-experience en-owns."[247] It is the en-owning of be-ing that provides a particular understanding of the world in a given epoch.

If it is granted that be-ing is the source of the various forms of understanding throughout history, one expects that this would be the case in any epoch, whether that epoch is marked by authenticity or inauthenticity. The times in which man has a fundamentally appropriate or flawed understanding of the world and of be-ing, then, would be determined by be-ing itself, not by man. In short, be-ing decides whether an age will be authentic or inauthentic. Heidegger appears to be unhesitant in granting that conclusion: "is there behind that preeminence of beings (of "actuality", of "deed", of "life") already a decision made about being? But perhaps this "decision" is also only a lack of decision that from time to time be-ing allows to occur in order to entrust beings to groundlessness."[248] History, Heidegger has said, is a history of decisions of be-ing, which boils down to a series of understandings of what be-ing is. The current decision is one for technology and calculability as key to understanding be-ing, a view that is fundamentally flawed. But such decisions on the course of history are not man's provenance; they belong to be-ing. Be-ing, the conclusion appears to run, decides whether man will be authentic or inauthentic. Man cannot change the understanding of be-ing he has, so there is no room for any sort of activism with regard to mindfulness. Man is what be-ing makes him, and nothing more.

This route is that typically taken by those such as Braver, who, when claiming that "Later Heideggerian man is an exceedingly passive being,"[249] defends his claim by arguing that, in his later work, "Heidegger claims that it is not man who establishes or forms our relation to beings,

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[247] *Mindfulness* 125.
[248] *Mindfulness* 183.
[249] Braver 275.

but Being."[250] The fact that it is be-ing that establishes the nature of an epoch, and not man, means that man cannot act to take on an understanding of be-ing, authentic or not: "The clearing or relation to beings is not created or instituted by us, as in the Kantian Paradigm; rather, it is "granted" or "sent" to us and we receive it."[251] Olafson argues in a similar direction; for Olafson, when Heidegger in his later work drops the 'active' character of a Dasein who freely creates projects, philosophically that amounts to "making being as presence independent of the kind of entity – Dasein – in whose mode of being – existence – it had been grounded."[252] In *Being and Time* it is Dasein's freedom to create and pursue projects that threaten the unique status of Being; Heidegger's response, Olafson says, is to make Being itself free and independent. For both of these interpreters, it was Dasein who established Being in *Being and Time*; in the later work, passivism or the elimination of activism is associated with the independence of be-ing.

Neither Braver nor Olafson is wrong here, as far as it goes. Given how the active-passive dimension was originally introduced in Chapter 1, however, the question exactly is how far it goes. In other words, if there is a passivism in *Mindfulness*, what sort of passivity is it? Is it enough to mark a transition from the account in *Being and Time*? Or is does it only appear passivist relative to the supposed activism of *Being and Time*, which Braver and Olafson both accept in strong forms? Recall the distinction between three forms of the relation between activism and passivism. One is understood with regard to the *creation of possibilities*: do possibilities come from (in the language of *Mindfulness*) be-ing or man? Second is with regard to *acknowledgment*: is it be-ing or man who brings about the recognition, via anxiety or dismay, of Dasein's true possibilities? Third is with regard to *pursuit of possibilities*: given that Dasein's true possibilities are recognized as such, is it be-ing or man that brings about the sustained

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[250] Braver 274.
[251] Braver 275.
[252] Olafson 109-110.

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pursuit of those possibilities? Braver's and Olafson's accounts lean towards activism and passivism with regard to the creation of possibilities. As seen in Chapter 2, that account cannot be right, since *Being and Time* is not activist in the sense they describe. But that does not put the issue to rest, as one can further ask what to make of the second half of their story, that referring to the later work. Braver and Olafson are associating the emergence of passivism and the disappearance of activism with the creation aspect of activity and passivity; they consider no other way in which activism and passivism might be understood. But recall that I argued in the previous chapter that *Being and Time* was passivist in the first two senses, yet actually activist in the third, weakest senes. If the account in *Mindfulness* is fully passive, i.e., passive in all three senses, that still marks a significant content change. The question remains, then: is the account in *Mindfulness* passive in its totality, i.e., in all three senses outlined above?

With regards to the first sense, that of the creation of possibilities, it is already clear from what has been said that *Mindfulness* is passive. Heidegger is far more direct than he was in *Being and Time*: the clearing, and man's grounding-attunement, are not determined by man, but by the en-owning of be-ing, by the particular way in which be-ing is manifested in a given stage of history. If the modern age features the preeminence of beings in a certain way, it is because be-ing has allowed it. This is no different from *Being and Time*, where Dasein as Being-in-the-world always already has a history that determines what its possibilities are. Being authentic is in part recognizing one's historically determined possibilities (one's Situation), which just are the possibilities of one's epoch in *Mindfulness*. Being determined Dasein's possibilities there, and it does so here. Little more needs to be said there.

With regards to the second sense, and whether it is man or be-ing that brings about dismay, it is important to begin by recalling that dismay is a grounding-attunement. A

grounding-attunement is not simply something that someone stumbles upon, or something that someone invents; it is a basic aspect of the way in which the world is understood, one corresponding to *Being and Time*'s anxiety. As anxiety is a particular kind of mood, dismay is a particular grounding-attunement, one that "is attuned by be-ing" and through which "post-metaphysical man who undertakes this groundership for openness is sundered from all ensnarement by mere beings."[253] Leaving aside for the moment what it means to 'undertake this groundership for openness,' man in this situation is sundered by a grounding-attunement instantiated by be-ing, dismay. This grounding-attunement is not something that comes from nowhere or without precedent: "And nevertheless already a hinting comes to pass; nevertheless the dismay that sets free strikes into the machination of beings."[254] In language reminiscent of "What is Metaphysics?" Heidegger thinks that the modern age has hints of anxiety, that it is there but sleeping and needs to be recognized. The openness that reveals what man's decisions are is not something that man uncovers on his own: "Attunement throws from out of itself the 'time-space' of fundamental decisions and throws the attuned one into this 'time-space'."[255]

The language at this point often actually appears to lean towards activism, as in the passage above that mentions man undertaking a groundership. However, with regard to the type of passivism currently under discussion, it is important to remember that the question is where the possibility of undertaking a groundership comes from. It comes from an attunement, and attunements come from be-ing; we don't decide whether to have dismay, man must "be seized by"[256] it as something that "throws from out of itself the 'time-space' of fundamental decisions." Man, in the epoch of technology, is exposed to the possibility of dismay as an attunement, an

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[253] *Mindfulness* 220.
[254] *Mindfulness* 211.
[255] Ibid.
[256] *Mindfulness* 220.

attunement that opens up certain possibilities, including those that extend beyond technology's grasp. In other periods, on the other hand, there are "epochs from which philosophy has to withhold the distress of decision in order to let them move towards their own completion."[257] Sometimes be-ing giveth distress, and sometimes it taketh away.

Finally, there is activism with regard to the pursuit of possibilities. Assume that the epoch in question is one where dismay makes itself clear: is it up to man to be-ing whether that is pursued? When dismay is recognized for what it is, it is recognized by those who Heidegger here calls the grounders, the founders, the few, or the ones to come. They are the ones who bear distress, "those of the deep awe who, for the sake of a moment of the necessary 'going under,' bear up the dismay that sets-free – bear it up indeed so that because of them dismay does not lose its dismayedness but will be received instead as a hint of the foremost shifting-apart of be-ing's 'time-space'."[258] The grounders are the ones who first experience the dismay of the age, and they act almost as prophets (though they are more likely poets), making sure to sustain the sense of dismay that is lurking underneath the ravages of the technological age. Their grounding is a 'going-under,' in a phrase reminiscent of Nietzsche's Zarathustra going under to the world of men, so as to teach them of the Übermensch. ""*I teach you the overman*," Zarathustra says in the Prologue; "Human being is something that must be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?"[259] On receiving a notable lack of enthusiastic response, Zarathustra proceeds to rail against the last man, "'What is love? What is creation? What is longing? What is a star?' – thus asks the last human being, blinking. Then the earth has become small, and on it hops the last human being, who makes everything small. His kind is ineradicable, like the flea beetle; the last

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257 *Mindfulness* 49.
258 *Mindfulness* 211.
259 Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and for None*, ed. Adrian del Caro and Robert B. Pippin, trans. Adrian del Caro (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 5.

human being lives longest."[260] The few who go under for Heidegger aim to engender awareness

of the dismay that rests at the base of the modern epoch, of the hollowness of the world as it is: a

small, over-connected, over-strained world, one that fits the small, insipid world of the last man.

But there is no guarantee that the grounders will pursue this path. It is possible, for

instance, that "those who since long ago are destined to prepare for the other beginning would be

unequal to this task insofar as they would rescue themselves in the diversions offered to them by

what is still contemporary: evoking something new; organizing something promising, and

reckoning with discipleship."[261] Zarathustra's ape, it seems, remains a threat to Heidegger's

grounders. Nor is even persisting in the awareness of be-ing an easy task, once one has arrived at

dismay: "The hour of be-ing is refused to us, and for the same reason it demands from us the

perseverance in the prolonged preparation of the crossing."[262] Language of persistence and

perseverance is common when describing the way in which the grounders must pursue the

openness of be-ing; it is something they must sustain, that takes work to preserve and requires

"the specific resiliency of be-ing-historical thinking that must be sterner and more enduring than

any "attack"."[263] The chance of going astray and losing sight of be-ing appears to be always

present; for instance, if man "does not ward it [the understanding of man's nature] off by veering

into the subterfuge of a presumed "science" of "man,""[264] or if he "evades . . . mindfulness" by

"[rescuing] himself into an explanation of all beings as a product of human "imagination.""[265]

These are real possibilities for Heidegger, and they do not appear to be settled one way or

another; they are things that could happen or not to those who experience dismay, but they

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[260] *Zarathustra* 10.
[261] *Mindfulness* 216.
[262] *Mindfulness* 217.
[263] *Mindfulness* 354.
[264] *Mindfulness* 45.
[265] *Mindfulness* 132.

happen as reactions to it on the part of the grounders, not as something that be-ing has

determined as the character of the epoch; be-ing has determined the current epoch as that of

technology (the grounders do not overcome technology even if they persist; they merely

experience their understanding of the world via technology as dismaying rather than comforting),

and the attunement of the grounders as that of distress, but whether they fall into the

misinterpretations that the epoch offers from there is up to them. Hence, sustained effort is

needed in order to ward off such misinterpretations.

Somewhat less disparate elaboration of this point can be found once again in "The Origin

of the Work of Art." There, Heidegger speaks of the work of art as that which opens up and

makes a world available. Works of art need creators, of course, but creators create only because

there is an opening of be-ing already there. What is of interest here is the preservers of such

works, those who come after the creators. The goal of philosophy, Heidegger says in

Mindfulness, is "to *be* the foundational knowing-awareness (preserve the grounded truth)."[266]

This definition carries over from the idea of preservation in the realm of art: "Preserving the

work means: standing within the openness of beings that happens in the work."[267] What is such

preservation? It is a form of knowing, but not merely in the intellectual sense: "He who truly

knows what is, knows what he wills to do in the midst of what is."[268] "The willing here referred

to," Heidegger continues in an explicit link to earlier work, "is thought of in terms of the basic

experience of thinking in *Being and Time*." Preserving the truth of a work of art, which is

preserving the truth that is opened up in a given sphere, is a sort of willing. Not, of course,

willing in the sense of striving. To clarify, Heidegger adds that "The resoluteness intended in

Being and Time is not the deliberate action of a subject, but the opening up of human being, out

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[266] *Mindfulness* 41.
[267] "The Origin of the Work of Art" 65.
[268] Ibid.

of its captivity in that which is, to the openness of Being."[269] Recall *Being and Time*: "As resolute, Dasein is already taking action . . . . [T]his term must be taken so broadly that "activity" [*Aktivität*] will also embrace the passivity of resistance."[270] Or in this case, will embrace preservation of opennss against those forces that would distort it.

Zimmerman argued that *Being and Time* fell prey to subjectivity "insofar as Dasein is owned, to the extent that it *resolves* to anticipate the call of conscience, i.e., insofar as owned existence is possible only because Dasein steels itself to face its own finitude . . . . According to Heidegger [in *Being and Time*], resolve and will lie on the side of the subject."[271] If "On the Origin of the Work of Art" is to be trusted, and if *Mindfulness* is to be trusted when it speaks of "the will to mindfulness"[272] as what can transform how we understand man, then Zimmerman is right about the need for Dasein to resolve upon its possibilities, in a senes. However, Heidegger appears to disagree about the purportedly changing role of will and resoluteness; it is apparently not a vestige of subjectivity, as it persists into the 1930s. And given what I have argued with regards to Heidegger's view of activity and passivity in the 1930s, it appears as though we should trust Heidegger on this.

Certainly, something has changed in Heidegger's writings when one moves from *Being and Time* to the 1930s and beyond. But the question remains what that is. It should not be taken as given that, because Heidegger uses different terms (which he certainly does) and speaks in a different way (which he certainly does), Heidegger must be saying something different in terms of substance. A close examination of *Mindfulness*, with some reference to "On the Origin of the

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[269] Ibid.
[270] *Being and Time* 347.
[271] Zimmerman 103.
[272] *Mindfulness* 131.

Work of Art," has in fact shown it not to be the case. If there was a *Kehre*, then, either it did not happen by the time of *Mindfulness* or it was not a change in content. No one thinks that nothing has changed by the late 1930s; if there is a *Kehre* at all, it is generally agreed, it is in full swing by then. But that is far from the whole story. For one, the changes in Heidegger's writing did not stop with *Mindfulness*. 'Machination' and 'power overpowering itself,' and even 'mindfulness,' will not remain central terms in his lexicon, or be used much at all after the 1930s; likewise, the fragmented style of the be-ing-historical treatises will not be repeated. Some terms, such as 'technology,' will remain, but much has yet to happen. Are there perhaps further changes in store after the 30s? And if there are not, that still doesn't answer the real driving question, which is just what *is* going on through all of these changes in Heidegger's writings. What is behind these transformations? What is the purpose, if it is not to revamp the basic concepts in Heidegger's thought? How will the changes in works after *Mindfulness* fit into the picture and do they align with the basic story established thus far? Finally, what, at the end of the day, is the *Kehre*, and how is Heidegger's understanding of authenticity affected by it through the course of his career? To answer these questions in sufficient depth, the account must continue, into the 1940s and beyond. Only then will the perspective be reached to determine what Heidegger's notion of authenticity is if there is a consistent one, or what happens to it if it changes. Then, one might start to ask the question of just what is going on with the *Kehre*.

CHAPTER 4

THE LATE HEIDEGGER

Whatever changes there are in Heidegger's works throughout his career, there is usually little discussion of whether much shifts in the last decades of his life. It is generally taken for granted that, by the mid-1940s, Heidegger's views are settling. Much of historical interest happens in this time, of course, such as the end of Heidegger's relation to the Nazi party with the end of the party itself in 1945, Heidegger's banishment from teaching for the rest of the decade, his eventual resumption of lecturing in the early 1950s, and the slowing down of his work until only the occasional lecture or essay is composed in the mid-1960s, with the 1966 *Der Spiegel* interview in many ways marking the endpoint of Heidegger's productive career. Since I have been arguing that the content changes in Heidegger's career are not nearly as drastic as most think, and there is far less debate about whether there is much change in this period compared to the late 30s, there is little need to argue year by year about the wide variety of essays, lectures, notes, and other materials that Heidegger produces towards the end.

However, just because few argue for substantial content changes in the last decades does not mean that no notice should be taken of this period. Recall that, if one starts from *Being and Time*, there appear to be roughly three periods in Heidegger's mature body of work: *Being and Time* and the works through the late 1920s or early 1930s, the more experimental works of the mid- to late-1930s to around 1940, and the fully 'later Heidegger' of the 1940s on. And indeed, there is once again a fairly dramatic shift from the 1930s to the 1940, one that should be discussed. There are no more equivalents to *Contributions* or *Mindfulness* after 1940, either in terms of language or style. The dramatic tone of the be-ing historical treatises appears to settle,

leaving in its place (according to the strong reading) the mystical, quietist Heidegger of the later years. In terms of topics, Heidegger spends more time talking about the history of philosophy than directly about his own views. How does this Heidegger square with the Heidegger who wrote *Being and Time*, and who I have argued is also the Heidegger behind *Mindfulness*? If there is a shift in the discussion towards mysticism and history at this point, then based on what was argued in the previous chapters it is likely not as dramatic a shift as many argue. But that leaves much open. For instance: many call Heidegger a mystic in his later years, and the style of his final works appears to endorse such a reading. Is mysticism a fair lens through which to read mindfulness, or as Heidegger calls it in this later period, releasement (*Gelassenheit*)? Does Heidegger's discussion of technology and mindfulness, and their relation to Western history, develop in any way past what he says in *Mindfulness*? What should be said of Heidegger's reflections, in his later years, on his own previous works?

Following the general direction set by the above questions, this chapter will serve several purposes. Above all, as before, will be the question of whether there is any shift in Heidegger's view of authenticity as compared to previous periods. However, this will not be done only through a direct comparative discussion, as was the case in Chapter 3. While such work will be done, the discussion will also follow a series of guiding questions which arise from consideration of authenticity and of the *Kehre* generally.

The first question will be about Heidegger's interpretation of himself, specifically with regard to authenticity and inauthenticity in *Being and Time*: does Heidegger fairly portray his own previous views when he interprets them through the lens of his later conceptual apparatus? He claims to just be clarifying his own views to the reader, but it is tempting to say of Heidegger's reading of himself what he, in 1935, identifies as a common accusation against his

interpretations in general: that "what we have said is in fact just a result of that violent character and one-sidedness, which has already become proverbial, of the Heideggerian mode of interpretation."[273] Working especially from "Letter on 'Humanism,'" but with additional support as the chapter progresses, I will argue that Heidegger can and does fairly explain *Being and Time*'s conception of authenticity through the terminology of the later period.

That opening discussion will provide an initial look at some of Heidegger's terminology in the 1940s, which will be expanded through further discussion of the two addenda to "What is Metaphysics?" written in the same decade (which will also show examples of Heidegger fairly interpreting himself). Next, more straightforwardly comparative discussions of technology as it appears in "The Question Concerning Technology," revised in the mid-1950s, and readiness for the god in the *Der Spiegel* interview will round out the discussion of history's relation to authenticity in the final decades. It will be shown that, by the time of these final works, Heidegger has clarified and elaborated the somewhat unclear discussion of authentic history in *Being and Time*, offering a more complete picture that is both consistent with his previous writings and easier to grasp. This addresses the second question, of whether Heidegger's view of Western history develops. It does indeed, but in terms of depth, not orientation.

Finally, I will turn once again to the active-passive dimension via a discussion of mysticism. Should Heidegger's views be taken as mystical or quasi-mystical? I will approach this question through a discussion of releasement, *Gelassenheit* in German, and a comparison with one of Heidegger's favorite (though not most quoted) thinkers, the thirteenth century German mystic Meister Eckhart. Heidegger's conception of *Gelassenheit* will be elaborated alongside Eckhart's corresponding notion of *Gelassenheit*, typically translated as 'detachment.'

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[273] Heidegger, Martin. *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000) 187.

Is Heidegger's *Gelassenheit* a total detachment from and passivity with respect to worldly affairs, like that of the mystics? Heidegger's *Gelassenheit*, unlike that of Eckhart, will be shown to retain the active aspect found in Heidegger's previous works; *Gelassenheit* is not a total surrender of the will, but an altogether different type relation to the world that does not involve the sort of assertion epitomized by technology. More specifically, Heidegger's *Gelassenheit* is not a surrendering of the will to history, but a preservation in the sense of guarding one's historical destiny against that which would disguise or distort it; one does not choose one's destiny, but neither does one simply lose oneself in, and become for practical purposes a tool of, the flow of history, in the way that Eckhart's detached person becomes, for all intents and purposes, a mere extension of God's will. There is no History-thing or Being-thing that guides man's destiny for Heidegger; history is what Dasein lives, neither controlling nor controlled by it. And thus is authenticity, from *Being and Time* on: a recognition of that which is beyond one's power but must be chosen in order to be realized.

4.1 HEIDEGGER ON HEIDEGGER

From the 1940s on, as in the 1930s, Heidegger rarely uses the terms 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity,' and by this point they all but disappear. One of the very few times that they are explicitly discussed is in the "Letter on Humanism," and the exact import of the passage, as is the case frustratingly often, is initially unclear. There, in the midst of discussing several concepts from *Being and Time*, Heidegger says that

> the terms "authenticity" and "inauthenticity," which are used in a provisional fashion, do not imply a moral-existentiell or an "anthropological" distinction but rather a relation

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that, because it has been hitherto concealed from philosophy, has yet to be thought for the first time, an "ecstatic" relation of the essence of the human being to the truth of being.[274]

At least some of what Heidegger says here, about what authenticity and inauthenticity do not refer to, is unchanged from *Being and Time*, where he says that "the analytic of Dasein is not aimed at laying an ontological basis for anthropology; its purpose is one of fundamental ontology,"[275] one "far removed from any moralizing critique of everyday Dasein."[276] What comes across as entirely new is his positive claim that the terms 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity' refer to "an "ecstatic" relation of the essence of the human being to the truth of being." Heidegger adds, apparently with the intention of clarifying, that "this relation is as it is not by reason of ek-sistence [which, recall, is Dasein's or man's essence]; on the contrary, the essence of ek-sistence is destined existentially-ecstatically from the essence of the truth of being." Taking a first stab at interpreting the passage, Heidegger seems to be saying that in *Being and Time*, 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity' refer not to moral or anthropological concepts, but specifically to how the essence of the human being, ek-sistence, relates to the truth of being, a relation that is ecstatic. Further, the establishment of this relation does not come about, is not the specific way it is, because of man (because of ek-sistence), but because of the truth of being.

How does Heidegger's explanation square with the interpretation of authenticity and inauthenticity offered thus far? "An "ecstatic" relation of the essence of the human being to the truth of being" is not the easiest definition to work with. However, it is also not indecipherable. In the 1940s Heidegger speaks frequently of the truth of being and how it relates to the human essence; in fact, it is one of his guiding preoccupations at that time. The terms "authenticity" and

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[274] *Pathmarks* 253.
[275] *Being and Time* 244.
[276] *Being and Time* 211.

"inauthenticity," Heidegger says in the passage currently in question, refer to the relation

between man's essence, which he calls ek-sistence, and the truth of being, with the relation

between the two itself being ecstatic. What do all of these pieces mean?

First, what is man's essence? What exactly is ek-sistence? Heidegger defines the term

fairly straightforwardly: "In terms of content ek-sistence means standing out into the truth of

being."[277] Ek-sistence, in brief, refers to the fact that man in some way is in the truth of being,

taking part in it or "standing out into" it. Taking part in the truth of being is man's essence; but

what does it mean to say that it is man's essence? A complete discussion of Heidegger's concept

of essence is beyond the scope of this study, but the "Letter" itself offers some clarification.

While explaining the famous assertion in *Being and Time* that "*the essence of Dasein lies in its*

existence,"[278] Heidegger explains it as saying that "the human being occurs essentially in such a

way that he is the "there" [*das "Da"*], that is, the clearing of being."[279] Heidegger's explanation

here indicates that the essence of something is the way in which it essentially occurs. In *Being*

and Time man, as Dasein, always includes the *Da*, understood as a particular finite set of

possibilities, the 'there' or 'wherein' in which it finds itself, as a part of it. Being in such a

'wherein' is part of man's existential constitution: ""*Being-in" is thus the formal existential*

expression for the Being of Dasein, which has Being-in-the-world as its essential state."[280]

Though 'essence' isn't meant in the typical sense of an abstract, timeless characteristic, it

maintains the sense of a feature a thing has so long as it is that type of thing. To say that man

'occurs essentially' as the *Da*, then, is to say that man always is as the *Da* whenever he appears;

so long as man is, man is in a 'there.' Carrying this over, man, whenever he occurs as man, does

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[277] *Pathmarks* 249.
[278] *Being and Time* 67.
[279] *Pathmarks* 248.
[280] *Being and Time* 80.

so as something that is standing out into the truth of being. In brief, the essence of the human

being, according to this passage, is always the occurrence of standing out into the truth of being;

man is always standing out into the truth of being as long as he is man.

Next, what is the truth of being, and what is it to stand out into it? The truth of being

receives the beginnings of an explanation when Heidegger refers to "the *Da*, the clearing as the

truth of being itself,"[281] the *Da* being once again the *Da* of Dasein. Recall that the term 'Dasein'

can be read etymologically in German as 'to be [*sein*] there [*da*],' a point Heidegger makes

frequently. The truth of being is the *Da*, the there in which Dasein finds itself, which Heidegger

also refers to here as the clearing. In speaking of the *Da*, Heidegger says that, "As ek-sisting, the

human being sustains Da-sein in that he takes the *Da*, the clearing of being, into "care." But Da-

sein itself occurs essentially as "thrown." It unfolds essentially in the throw of being as a destinal

sending."[282] 'Care,' in *Being and Time*, is the term for the Being of Dasein, Dasein having

previously been discussed in *Being and Time* in terms of possibility and Being-in-the-world.

Several terms besides authenticity from *Being and Time* have cropped up; do they clarify

Heidegger's self-interpretation?

'Care' is defined with precision in *Being and Time* as "ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-

(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world)."[283] As the definition

shows, care and Being-in-the-world have an important connection, one that cannot be

understated: "Being-in-the-world is essentially care."[284] Heidegger's use of the term 'care' in

Being and Time does not, unsurprisingly, reflect a psychological state of worry or concern; later

in *Being and Time*, Heidegger explains care as a temporal unity with three parts: "Temporality

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[281] *Pathmarks* 256.
[282] *Pathmarks* 249.
[283] *Being and Time* 237.
[284] Ibid.

makes possible the unity of existence, facticity, and falling, and in this way constitutes primordially the totality of the structure of care."[285] Care is temporality, not understood as the time measured by the clock but as time lived in the world: foregoing extensive definitions of existence and falling, and recalling the previous discussion of facticity, care consists of Dasein's relation to the future grasped in terms of possibilities, Dasein's past grasped as facticity, and Dasein's present grasped as falling into entities as what one is concerned with. To explain in somewhat more detail: Dasein, as long as it exists, has possibilities that it moves towards (existence) that are not infinite, but limited in some way (facticity) and which it pursues in the midst of a world of entities with which it is already engaged, one that it understands in terms of its existence and facticity and one which it tends to get absorbed in, a tendency exacerbated by *das Man* (falling). These three are not separable: possibilities, recall, are only graspable in terms of factical limitations, for instance, and the entities one is currently concerned with are only graspable in terms of historical limits and futural possibilities through which to grasp them. Care, then, delineates Dasein's existence as a temporal phenomenon consisting of features which are also the major features of Being-in-the-world, describable in terms of Dasein as the (present) pursuit of (historically founded) possibilities (which reach into the indeterminate future).

Returning to the "Letter on Humanism," the truth of being is the clearing of being. It must be taken into care, which is to say into man's way of Being-in-the-world, into the specific way in which man understands his possibilities. To use a post-*Being and Time* term, the truth of being must be appropriated (*ereignen*) by man in man's historical world. But to say that it must be appropriated in man's world, since Being-in-the-world is temporal, is to say that it must be taken on temporally, via the temporal structure of care. Adding here that the phenomena of temporality, past, present, and future, are referred to in *Being and Time* as the three *ecstases* (in

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[285] *Being and Time* 376.

German, *Ekstasen*; Heidegger draws on the etymological root of 'ek-stase' as 'standing out') of temporality,[286] one part of the puzzling passage is explained: the relation of the essence of human being, ek-sistence, to the truth of being is an ecstatic one by definition, because that relation is the taking into care of the particular 'there' of man's world, which is temporal by definition; anything taken into care is taken into care ecstatically, there is no other way.

Thus far, we have seen that care is in some ways a more complete, temporally inflected understanding of Being-in-the-world. Ek-sistence is man's essence. But man is also Being-in-the-world; the 'human way to be,' if it is anything in *Being and Time*, is Being-in-the-world. This solves the second part of the puzzle: in short, ek-sistence *is* another way of describing care, which *is* the complete description of Being-in-the-world, accounting for past, present, and future.

Recall that the clearing, the *Da*, is the truth of being. Here once again is the passage where 'the clearing of being' is discussed: "As ek-sisting, the human being sustains Da-sein in that he takes the Da, the clearing of being, into "care." But Da-sein itself occurs essentially as "thrown." It unfolds essentially in the throw of being as a destinal sending." Heidegger says of the clearing of being that ""World" is the clearing of being into which the human being stands out on the basis of his thrown essence;"[287] that is, the world of Being-in-the-world is the clearing of being, the *Da* (which again confirms that taking the *Da* into care is ecstatic, since we now see that it fully means taking man's particular Being-in-the-world, his possibilities, into care). This explanation of clearing [*Lichtung*], when taken as the *Da*, matches the usage of 'clearing' in *Being and Time*: "*as* Being-in-the-world [Dasein] is cleared [*gelichtet*] in itself, not through any other entity, but in such a way that it *is* itself the clearing. Only for an entity which is existentially cleared in this way does that which is present-at-hand become accessible in the light

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[286] *Being and Time* 377.
[287] *Pathmarks* 266.

or hidden in the dark."[288] In other words, the clearing is that wherein entities appear, and "Dasein *is* its world existingly,"[289] insofar as its essence is to exist in a world, Dasein being the pursuit of possibilities that are manifest through and with a world. When Heidegger was quoted at the start of this discussion as saying that "the human being occurs essentially in such a way that he is the "there" [*das "Da"*], that is, the clearing of being," he is saying that the clearing of being is the world of Being-in-the-world, which is what man is. Man must take his Being-in-the-world, which means must take his world, his possibilities, into care, that is, grasp it temporally, ecstatically. The pieces now fall into place: to say that 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity' refer to "an "ecstatic" relation of the essence of the human being to the truth of being" is precisely to say that those two terms refer to ways in which man, as Being-in-the-world, relates to his world as the temporal wherein of his possibilities, that they refer to ways in which man ek-sists (grasps possibilities) with regard to the clearing of being (the world); that is, they refer to how man takes on the possibilities that make up his Being-in-the-world.

The picture is not quite complete, however, for Heidegger adds that "Da-sein itself occurs essentially as "thrown." It unfolds essentially in the throw of being as a destinal sending." Dasein is thrown, and it is thrown in a destinal sending. Recall that in *Being and Time* destiny is understood as the authentic historizing of a community, as opposed to the fate of an individual historizing Dasein. Recall also that little more is said on the matter, and that the concept is left rather unclear. How exactly does an individual Dasein take part in its destiny, and how does that relate to its fate? Heidegger does not answer these questions in *Being and Time*. What is clear is what is indicated in the reference to thrownness: fate and destiny alike require the taking over of Dasein's historicity, which means the authentic grasping of Dasein's thrownness.

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[288] *Being and Time* 171.
[289] *Being and Time* 416.

To say, then, that in *Being and Time* authenticity and inauthenticity refer to ways in which man grasps his Being-in-the-world, and to say that this Being-in-the-world as the clearing (or truth) of being is unfolded as a destinal sending (where "sending" is the translation of *schicken*, etymologically tied by Heidegger to "destiny" [*Geschick*]), is to say that these terms refer to two ways in which man, as Dasein, can grasp his historical situation, that into which he is thrown, which comes not from the individual but from the throw of being. To say "the throw of being" here almost seems to make being an agent intentionally throwing Dasein into history (something that is discussed more in the section on mysticism), but if it is recalled that the truth of being is the clearing of being, that the clearing of being is Dasein's *Da*, and that the *Da* is the there of Being-in-the-world into which Dasein is thrown, such that the throw refers to Dasein's being in the midst of a world, then everything comes together: according to Heidegger's self-interpretation, in *Being and Time* the terms 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity,' refer to two ways in which man can grasp his historical situation, the world into which he was thrown without choice, but which man can respond to. This matches *Being and Time*'s account of authentic historicity, with two differences: (1) it puts stronger rhetorical emphasis on being, understood as the clearing of being, understood as the particular historical locality of man's Being-in-the-world, as the site of authenticity or inauthenticity, and (2) it removes any reference to fate, placing the weight instead on destiny as the realm of choice. But these differences do not change the substance of the account; in this discussion, Heidegger is a fair interpreter of himself.

4.2 QUESTIONS ABOUT TECHNOLOGY

Thus far the focus has been on on Heidegger's retrospective look at authenticity and inauthenticity in *Being and Time*. That aside, what becomes of Heidegger's discussions of technology and mindfulness as he currently understands them?

In *Mindfulness*, an apparent major change appeared with the introduction of technology, understood in a sense that extended beyond technological objects to a specific way of understanding the world. Technology continues to be front and center in the 1940s and beyond. In particular, Heidegger moves into detailed discussions of technology in the 1950s, such as in "The Question Concerning Technology." There, technology is defined as "the challenging setting-upon through which what we call the real is revealed as standing-reserve,"[290] a way of grasping the world which Heidegger gives the name of 'enframing' (*Ge-stell*). As before, technology is a particular way in which the world is understood or revealed and with respect to which everything is interpreted. Here, though, Heidegger finally provides some of the clear examples lacking in previous explanations of technology. For instance, Heidegger says that "a tract of land is challenged into the putting out of coal and ore. The earth now reveals itself as a coal mining district, the soil as a mineral deposit."[291] Natural resources are seen as orderable, calculable quantities of expendable resource to be used for a practical purpose; the river Rhine is so much potential hydroelectric power to be unlocked, the earth a source of coal energy to be extracted for power.

While an environmentalist reading is sometimes tempting, Heidegger's view of technology, like before, is not about machinery versus nature. Heidegger's is not a critique of

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[290] *The Question Concerning Technology* 18.
[291] *The Question Concerning Technology* 14.

industry, at least not industry alone; industry is a symptom of technology, not the cause of its dominance. The way of understanding the world engendered by technology, its essence or "coming to presence,"[292] is a way the world reveals (or, using Heidegger's term, unconceals) itself to man. But a revealing of the world is not, and never was for Heidegger, limited to one aspect of life; the orderability and calculability of technology apply to man, the supposed orderer and calculator, as much as to everything else. "Only to the extent that man for his part is already challenged to exploit the energies of nature can this ordering revealing happen. If man is challenged, ordered, to do this, then does not man himself belong even more originally than nature within the standing-reserve?"[293] Heidegger once again provides concrete examples: "The current talk about human resources, about the supply of patients for a clinic, gives evidence of this."[294] When we talk of manpower for a construction project or a war, when advertisers talk of 'target demographics,' when people discuss what polls say about the electorate, human beings are treated as resources to be used for the purposes of construction, conflict, sales, or elections. Man is as orderable as the coal deposit or the river; human resources can be counted, analyzed, and used for a purpose. In this way man is under the sway of the epoch of technology, which is not something under his control, not something he decides to accept or not: "When man, in his way, from within unconcealment reveals that which presences, he merely responds to the call of unconcealment even when he contradicts it."[295] When man sees the world in terms of orderability, he is already subject to it; as said in *Mindfulness,* man's striving for power offers only "the *appearance* of self-assertion vis-à-vis beings,"[296] not actual control.

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[292] *The Question Concerning Technology* 22.
[293] *The Question Concerning Technology* 18.
[294] Ibid.
[295] *The Question Concerning Technology* 19.
[296] *Mindfulness* 13.

As seen in the above examples, the element of power and control that is central to the discussion of technology *Mindfulness* persists here. Natural resources are harnessed, taken over, transformed into resources for human consumption. Nature is subjected to a "challenging-forth"[297] by man, and Enframing itself, as the way of grasping the world established by technology, "sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth,"[298] in turn. "Unlocking, transforming, storing, distributing, and switching about," Heidegger says, are the ways in which the world is grasped and interpreted under Enframing. Control of the calculable and orderable, whether it be people or things, remains the common thread of technology. Though technology has been given a new definition and some new terminology, the basic aspects of it change little, if at all, from the discussion in *Mindfulness*; the account is perhaps more refined, but it continues to be taken as an understanding of the world focused on control, which it attains via interpreting the world as calculable, discrete resources subject to exploitation for the ends of the user, an understanding that envelops everything, including man and man's existence, at the same time.

The connection between Heidegger's account of technology and inauthenticity in *Being and Time* can be seen more clearly by looking back at a passage from Heidegger's discussion of technology in "Letter on 'Humanism'": "technological human beings, delivered over to mass society, can attain reliable constancy only by gathering and ordering all their plans and activities in a way that corresponds to technology."[299] The reference to ordering mirrors the emphasis on control in works both before and after the "Letter," but of particular note here is the reference to mass society as what man is taken over by in the epoch of technology, which draws obvious parallels to inauthenticity in *Being and Time*; more noteworthy still is that the paragraph in the "Letter" where technology is first mentioned proceeds into a discussion of the "peculiar

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[297] *The Question Concerning Technology* 16.
[298] *The Question Concerning Technology* 20.
[299] *Pathmarks* 268.

dictatorship of the public realm,"[300] closely echoing the "dictatorship of [*das Man*]" and

publicness in *Being and Time.* Heidegger is not subtle about the connection, as he repeats the

phrase "dictatorship of the public realm" further down, with an elaboration. Technology, he says

there, leads to the unconditional objectification of reality. Heidegger goes on:

> Language thereby falls into the service of expediting communication along routes where
> objectification – the uniform accessibility of everything to everyone – branches out and
> disregards all limits. In this way language comes under the dictatorship of the public
> realm, which decides in advance what is intelligible and what must be rejected as
> unintelligible. What is said in *Being and Time* (1927), sections 27 and 35, about [*das
> Man*] in no way means to furnish an incidental contribution to sociology.[301]

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger says of *das Man*'s form of communication, idle talk, that "What is

said-in-the-talk as such, spreads in wider circles and takes on an authoritative character. Things

are so because one says so."[302] "[I]dle talk discourages any new inquiry and any disputation, and

in a peculiar way suppresses them and holds them back."[303] *Das Man*'s dominance of language

through idle talk, which Heidegger also refers to as the "dominance of the public way in which

things have been interpreted,"[304] exercises power over what can and cannot be said, over what, as

he says in the "Letter," makes sense and what does not.

The power of idle talk is not limited to language, however. Discourse, in *Being and Time*,

is equiprimordial with, which is to say co-existent with, understanding and discourse, the three of

which together constitute Dasein's grasp of its world.[305] Accordingly, idle talk as inauthentic

discourse always co-exists with the inauthentic forms of understanding and interpretation, which

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[300] *Pathmarks* 242.
[301] *Pathmarks* 242-3.
[302] *Being and Time* 212.
[303] *Being and Time* 213.
[304] Ibid.
[305] *Being and Time* 172.

are curiosity and ambiguity, respectively. Curiosity is the form of understanding that does not take the time to understand; it drifts from one thing to the next, "seeks novelty only in order to leap from it anew to another novelty."[306] It is always distracted as a result, never standing still, and it is through curiosity that Dasein receives the impression, related to *Mindfulness'* discussion of lived-experience, of a "'life' which, supposedly, is genuinely 'lively'."[307] Ambiguity, for its part, is incapable of interpreting anything. In the everyday public understanding which is ambiguous, "it soon becomes impossible to decide what is disclosed in a genuine understanding, and what is not."[308] "Everything looks as if it were genuinely understood"[309] because everyone knows what they are supposed to say about it, and yet this presumed clarity prevents any real investigation into the matter at hand. (As when a person will give a view but, when pressed, just shrug her shoulders and say, "I don't know.") And as implied above, these three features of inauthenticity reinforce each other. For example, "Idle talk and ambiguity, having seen everything, having understood everything, develop the supposition that . . . the possibilities of [Dasein's] Being will be secure, genuine, and full;"[310] curiosity "says what one "must" have read and seen. In being everywhere and nowhere, curiosity is delivered over to idle talk."[311] Idle talk is part of a broader phenomenon, one that imposes a way of grasping the world and interpreting things in it, and one that "is constantly going wrong [*versieht sich*] in its projects, as regards the genuine possibilities of Being."[312]

Close analogies between the description of inauthenticity in *Being and Time* and discussions of technology are not limited to the "Letter." In "The Question Concerning

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[306] *Being and Time* 216.
[307] *Being and Time* 217.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Ibid.
[310] *Being and Time* 222.
[311] *Being and Time* 217.
[312] *Being and Time* 218.

Technology," Heidegger again uses the example of language. In 1955, as in 1927, he says that "newspapers and illustrated magazines . . . set public opinion to swallowing what is printed, so that a set configuration of opinion becomes available on demand,"[313] instantly and common understood by everyone and, at the same time, not fully understood by anyone. Besides mentioning mass media in the initial discussion of *das Man*, Heidegger says in *Being and Time* that idle talk, the inauthentic form of communication, affects the written as well as the spoken word, where it "feeds upon superficial reading [*dem Angelesenen*]"[314] so that everyone can claim to understand it, while no one really does. In the lecture ". . . Poetically Man Dwells . . . ," composed and revised around the same time as "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger claims that "there rages round the earth an unbridled yet clever talking, writing, and broadcasting of spoken words . . . . Language becomes the means of expression. As expression, language can decay into a mere medium for the printed word."[315]

    Heidegger's concern with the ways in which mass society controls man's understanding of the world, in particular through language, and his stated aim in *Being and Time* "to preserve *the force of the most elemental words* in which Dasein expresses itself, and to keep the common understanding from levelling them off,"[316] are part of the same project, and that project is one that persists throughout Heidegger's works. Compare the account of inauthentic communication in the 1950s with the uniform objectification and communication of technological thinking discussed in the "Letter," where "objectification – the uniform accessibility of everything to everyone — branches out and disregards all limits," allowing the public realm to determine "in advance what is intelligible and what must be rejected as unintelligible." Then compare this to

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[313] *The Question Concerning Technology* 18.
[314] *Being and Time* 212.
[315] *Poetry Language Thought* 213.
[316] *Being and Time* 262.

Mindfulness, where technology imposes a universal, unquestionable understanding of reality that gives man the impression of control while simultaneously controlling his understanding. In all of these works it is *Das Man* in the sense of the public realm, and the public realm in the sense of a grasp of the world that establishes a single, universal interpretation of beings as things to be reckoned with in a single way, that is the target. The connection is merely made more explicit when Heidegger ties "technological human beings" and mass society together in the "Letter." *Das Man* as a distorting influence persists in terms of its role in grasping possibilities; what changes is that it is now explicitly tied to technology as such, and the features previously ascribed to it without explicit historical determinations are now ascribed specifically to the technological epoch.

As discussed in the previous chapter, this interpretation of the relationship between technology and inauthenticity is compatible with the view that inauthenticity represents a *transhistorical*, rather than an *ahistorical*, phenomenon, where inauthenticity is something whose broad features persist in different epochs, but whose features always and necessarily take on certain historical forms—inauthenticity apart from historical circumstances may be conceptually graspable, but it never exists in such a way. That inauthenticity has the very same features as technology does not imply that either of them is purely historical or purely ahistorical; rather, the picture remains coherent, and the differences in rhetorical perspective are accounted for, when one takes technology to be an instantiation of inauthenticity, the latter only actually existing in historical forms. That is, if one has an argument for such a view.

4.3 INAUTHENTICITY AND THE PERSISTENCE OF ERROR

On their face, the features of technology outlined above are the same as they have always been, which would also mean, on my interpretation, that they are fully compatible with the account of inauthenticity in *Being and Time*. But here the persistent concern about the respective roles of history in inauthenticity and in technology arises once more, with renewed vigor. Heidegger says of technology that it is a particular destining of being. In "The Question Concerning Technology" Heidegger defines destining, and technology as a destining, by saying that "We shall call that sending-that-gathers [*versammelde Schicken*] which first starts man upon a way of revealing, *destining* [*Geschick*]. It is from out of this destining that the essence of all history [*Geschichte*] is determined."[317] Destining is the happening (*geschehen*) or appropriation (*ereignen*) that sets man on a particular way of revealing, that is, a particular way of grasping the world. Destining, in other words, is the specific grasp of the world that appears in a given epoch, being different for the Greeks, the Romans, medieval Europe, the Enlightenment, and our own age.[318] In medieval Europe, for example, reality was seen through the perspective of Christianity, everything in the world being grasped as the created product of an uncreated God. To be a thing, for the medieval Christian, exactly is to be the result of an eternal, perfect, uncreated God. On Heidegger's view of history, while religious belief did not disappear with the Enlightenment, the medieval Christian understanding of what the world is, of what it means to be a thing, did. With the Enlightenment the world came to be seen as something graspable scientifically, which is to say by way of measurement, with the standard of scientific precision being mathematical

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[317] *The Question Concerning Technology* 24.
[318] Heidegger's interest, here as almost always, being the West; he does not discuss non-Occidental history, and does not take any pains to relate events outside of Europe and the US to his view of history (he rarely even says much about the United States, but when he does it is basically as being on the same course as Europe).

physics. One destining is replaced in time by another, and so one way of grasping the world is replaced by another. As Heidegger says in "The Turning" (*Die Kehre*), the follow-up lecture to "The Question Concerning Technology" given in 1949, "*the surmounting* of a destining of Being—*here and now, the surmounting of Enframing—each time comes to pass out of the arrival of another destining*, a destining that does not allow itself either to be logically and historiographically predicted or to be metaphysically construed as a sequence belonging to a process of history."[319]

Looking in particular at the italicized portion of the passage above, a problem appears: if one destining, an epoch in the history of Being such as the epoch of technology, only disappears through the emergence of another which it leads into, what role can there be for authenticity and inauthenticity? If authenticity and inauthenticity are grafted onto technology and mindfulness, and the latter are merely aspects of the current destining of Being, wouldn't they disappear altogether with the arrival of another destining? In which case, isn't there indeed a drastic change in the role of authenticity and inauthenticity compared to *Being and Time*? Do authenticity and inauthenticity, or any transhistorical factors, have any purpose? (This last question may pertain more directly to the active-passive dimension, but is important here insofar as one can ask whether authenticity and inauthenticity have any bearing to the transitions between epochs.)

The objection as it is now being presented is much stronger than before, insofar as epochs, along with their particular ways of understanding the world and all that comes with, appear to be eliminated by the arrival of a new epoch. If technology as Enframing is just an epoch, one that supplanted a previous epoch and will in turn be supplanted by another, then its features appear to be nothing more than features of an epoch. There would be no general features of which technology is a particular variant, as the transhistorical reading of inauthenticity

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[319] *The Question Concerning Technology* 39. (Emphasis mine.)

indicates. This leaves one of two options. First, technology and inauthenticity are indeed the same, but it is wrong to read inauthenticity as transhistorical; it must be a purely contemporary phenomenon, a far more difficult position to defend. Second, technology is not an instantiation of inauthenticity, the two accounts do not fit together, and so there must have been a drastic change in the content of Heidegger's account of inauthenticity.

This objection poses a problem for mindfulness as well. If technology is just the product of one epoch, one should ask what role mindfulness has outside of that epoch. Mindfulness, it has been said before, is mindfulness of the epoch. But will it have some general features that transcend epochs? Mindfulness appears to have no power to bring about a shift in epochs, since that is up to the destining of Being, i.e., the flow of history. Rather, mindfulness just is awareness of the epoch, which has been defined as awareness of lostness to beings, of anxiety or distress at the lack of distress. But, pressing further, such awareness of anxiety or distress is associated with the technological epoch in particular. What is there to be mindful of if technology disappears? And what of those epochs before the modern one? Can they be fairly called inauthentic, or anyone in them in authentic, if authenticity is mindfulness and mindfulness only makes sense relative to technology? People prior to the modern epoch weren't under the sway of technology, after all. At that time was there no inauthenticity, and thus no mindfulness or authenticity, either? Here Haar's claim, that "the importance of the distinction between authentic and inauthentic, originary and derivative, becomes attenuated . . . [, that] *Dasein* moves towards *neutrality*,"[320] becomes plausible once again.

On the other hand, in "The Question Concerning Technology" is included the following passage, which should be examined in its entirety:

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[320] Haar 40.

In whatever way the destining of revealing may hold sway, the unconcealment in which everything that is shows itself at any given time harbors the danger that man may quail at the unconcealed and may misinterpret it. Thus where everything that presences exhibits itself in the light of a cause-effect coherence, even God can, for representational thinking, lose all that is exalted and holy, the mysteriousness of his distance. In the light of causality, God can sink to the level of a cause, of *causa efficiens*. He then becomes, even in theology, the god of the philosophers, namely, of those who define the unconcealed and the concealed in terms of the causality of making, without ever considering the essential origin of this causality.

In a similar way the unconcealment in accordance with which nature presents itself as a calculable complex of the effects of forces can indeed permit correct determinations but precisely through these successes the danger can remain that in the midst of all that is correct the true will withdraw.[321]

According to Thomas Aquinas, no small figure in medieval philosophy, the being which we think of as God, the creator of the medieval worldview can be argued to exist as (1) the unmoved mover, (2) the uncaused cause, (3) the necessary being, (4) the most perfect being, and (5) the intelligent creator. This is shown via Aquinas' five ways in the *Summa Theologica*, based respectively on motion, cause, necessary and sufficient existence, degrees of goodness, and design. In a work of several thousand pages, each proof takes up a single paragraph, none of them being more than half a page, and each ending in a similar fashion: "we must come at last to a First Cause of motion; and there do we find God," "not to proceed indefinitely, there must be a First Efficient Cause; and there too we find God,"[322] and so on. But is this what, so to speak, finding God is all about? Aquinas admits at the start of his proofs that with them, "Although we know God in a general way, we do not therefore know Him absolutely,"[323] i.e., by knowing God's essence in the way that an ontological argument such as that of St. Anselm claims to. But there may be a greater concern than methods of proof here. What do proofs, and arguments in

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[321] *The Question Concerning Technology* 26. Italics in the first sentence mine.
[322] See Bonjoannes, Berardus. *Compendium of the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas Pars Prima* (London: Thomas Baker, Newman Street W, 1906) 5-7.
[323] Bonjoannes 7.

general, have to do with knowing God in the first place? Is knowing by way of an argument that the Christian God who created the earth and heavens, who came to earth in human guise, who suffered and died on the cross for the sins of man, exists, knowing God in what Heidegger or anyone else would call an authentic sense? Or might God, when considered solely in this way, just be "the god of the philosophers," as Heidegger says, a God who lacks "all that is exalted and holy, the mysteriousness of his distance?" What does it mean for a believing Christian to know God, and do either Aquinas or Anselm, the latter with his proof of a "being than which nothing greater can be conceived,"[324] touch on that question in their proofs?

It would be grossly unfair to both Aquinas and Anselm to accuse them of reducing the knowledge of God to mere proofs. Indeed, both think that a proper understanding of God's nature is something beyond what philosophical argument is capable of, a point they make unambiguously.[325] This does not mean, however, that their efforts cannot be distorted if they are appropriated in a way that fails to properly grasp their intent and purpose, and Heidegger appears to think that just something like this can happen. (In *Being and Time*, Heidegger has a story for just how this might happen: "And because [idle talk] has lost its primary relationship-of-Being towards the entity talked about [as, presumably, 'the Blessed' comprehend God], or else has never achieved such a relationship, it does not communicate in such a way as to let this entity be appropriated in a primordial manner."[326]) Such a distortion is not just one view rather than another, but a particular sort of mistake, according to Heidegger; to claim to know God merely through knowing His role in an argument as *causa efficiens*, as the causally efficacious thing that

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[324] Anselm of Canterbury. *Proslogion; Monologion; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool by Guanilon; and* Cur Deus Homo, Second edition, trans. S. N. Deane (Chicago: The Open Courts Publishing Company, 1910) 7.
[325] Anselm says: "I do not endeavor, O Lord, to penetrate thy sublimity, for in no wise do I compare my understanding with that; but I long to understand in some degree thy truth, which my heart believes and loves." (Anselm 6-7) Aquinas: "[God] cannot be comprehended by the created intellect, although He is so in a certain sense, inasmuch as the Blessed see His Essence, and seeing they possess, and possessing they enjoy." (Bonjoannes 30)
[326] *Being and Time* 212.

explains the existence of the world, is to distort the role of God in religious belief. It is to take a philosophical argument from Aristotle, which was not meant to be a religious argument in the first place, and appropriate it to a central object of religious faith.[327]

Moving to the second part of the passage, Heidegger says that such a distortion is similar to what happens when "nature presents itself as a calculable complex of the effects of forces," i.e., when nature is understood in accordance with the epoch of technology. It should not go without noting that Heidegger refers to the misunderstanding of God he is explaining in terms of "representational thinking," which is the modern epoch's form of thinking, and that his discussion is present-tense, so that he may appear to be referring specifically to modern-day views of God. But look again the first sentence of the passage: "*In whatever way the destining of revealing may hold sway*, the unconcealment in which everything that is shows itself at any given time harbors the danger that man may quail at the unconcealed and may misinterpret it." "In whatever way destining may hold sway" means that such misinterpretation may happen in whatever understanding of Being guides a historical epoch, since destining just is the understanding of Being; the discussion of God is then given as an example of this. Each epoch has its own destining that holds sway in which something like this can happen. So this form of misinterpretation, Heidegger says explicitly, can happen in multiple epochs. Such an order of

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[327] One might think in this case of Enlightenment-style deism, where God is treated in just this way. The lack of any religious, doctrinal, or faith-based element in deism is, in light of Heidegger's point, wholly consistent with the relegation of God to mere explanatory role; to lose the "mysterious distance" of God, and to accept only what arguments indicate, is to lose the foundation for practiced religion. As the speaker Philo says in Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, if all one should settle for is what can be argued for, and all that can be argued for is "*That the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence*," then "what can the most inquisitive, contemplative, and religious man do more than give a plain, philosophical assent to the proposition, as often as it occurs?" (Hume, David. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion and other Writings*, ed. Dorothy Coleman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 101-2.) Not a worldview with a strong sense of God's presence.

error, then, wherein "in the midst of all that is correct[328] the true will withdraw," is not a form of error exclusive to the epoch of technology. This class of mistake, which is the same class of mistake committed by technology, is something that can happen in any given epoch, regardless of the particular form of understanding that holds in that epoch. This just is to say that such a form of error is transhistorical.

However, just because technology is an instantiation of inauthenticity does not mean that it has the same role in history as every other form of inauthenticity. Heidegger has more to say about the modern epoch's form of inauthenticity in particular, something that does make it a target of special concern, and not merely because it is the contemporary form of inauthenticity:

> The destining of revealing is in itself not just any danger, but danger as such. Yet when destining reigns in the mode of Enframing, it is the supreme danger. This danger attests itself to us in two ways. As soon as what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but does so, rather, exclusively as standing-reserve, and man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the orderer of the standing-reserve, then he comes to the very brink of a precipitous fall; that is, he comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve . . . . But Enframing does not simply endanger man in his relationship to himself and to everything that is. As a destining, it banishes man into that kind of revealing which is an ordering. Where this ordering holds sway, it drives out every other possibility of revealing . . . . Where Enframing holds sway, regulating and securing of the standing-reserve mark all revealing. They no longer even let their own fundamental characteristic appear, namely, this revealing as such.[329]

The key feature of technology as Enframing, as opposed to other forms of inauthenticity, is the degree of its domination over the modern epoch. This domination manifests itself in two ways. These two ways are general features of inauthenticity, but in the epoch of technology they have a

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[328] To say that a proof of God's existence is a distortion is not the same as saying it is false; similarly, and as Heidegger himself notes in the passage in question, to say that a river is the source of hydroelectric power is not to say something false, but to only partially reveal the truth of what a river is. That's the problem with the epoch of technology; not that technological thinking itself is bad, but that technological thinking as the only form of thinking is bad.

[329] *The Question Concerning Technology* 27.

peculiar power. First, as previously discussed, man himself becomes another element of the standing reserve; man becomes a being in the same manner as all other beings, and to be a being for technology is to be an orderable, calculable quantity. This is different from previous forms of inauthenticity; compare, for example, the medieval worldview. An inauthentic understanding of the world at that time would take the world, including man, first and foremost as the created effect of an uncreated cause, God, where creation is understood primarily causally. While that understanding of the world, if taken without deeper understanding, will miss much what it means to say that existence is God's creation, will miss the true import and specialness of the claim about man's creation, it will still generally take man as a unique creation, one made in God's image. Man is understood as the causal product of God, but at least as one that is unique, not like other beings. This is important, for according to Heidegger man as Dasein is indeed unique; recall from *Being and Time* that it is that being for whom its Being is a concern; it has a relation to the world that other created objects, such as animals (though that is complicated) or rocks, do not, and even the inauthentic medieval worldview acknowledges that.

The technological epoch, on the other hand, does not allow for such a distinction; it treats man exactly like everything else, as a resource to be consumed. Besides the examples given previously, one might include the darker observation that in the epoch of technology, our general treatment of human life mirrors the way that *das Man* explains death in *Being and Time*: "One of these days one will die too, in the end; but right now it has nothing to do with us."[330] One watches the news and sees how many soldiers have died this week; they are so many resources, used up for the purposes of victory. The danger is that we too "will have to be taken as standing-reserve," ready to be used up. Man as Dasein thus loses awareness of his uniqueness as Dasein, as that Being that can decide about its Being, which is to say, act on possibilities. Instead, man

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[330] *Being and Time* 297.

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interprets himself in the same way as everything else, as a thing that can be used in the services

of ends, where that end may be something such as his own happiness. In *Mindfulness* Heidegger

refers to this as 'anthropomorphism,' where man is taken as a rational animal that represents

beings rather than as Da-sein. In this case, reality becomes a product of human imagination or

determination, but at the same time man is subject to the determination of reality as a whole:

"The heightening of man to an unbridled being of power and surrendering him to the

unknowable destiny of the course taken by 'beings in the whole' belong together, they *are* the

same."[331] Similarly for *Being and Time*, when Heidegger is discussing how *das Man* interprets

Dasein's Being:

> From the kind of Being which belongs to [*das Man*]—the kind which is closest—everyday
> Dasein draws its pre-ontological way of interpreting its Being . . . : it understands Dasein in
> terms of the world and comes across it as an entity within-the-world . . . . But because the
> phenomenon of the world itself gets passed over in this absorption in the world, its place gets
> taken [*tritt an seine Stelle*] by what is present-at-hand within-the-world, namely, Things.[332]

What is being described in the above passage is a general structure of inauthenticity, which is

then instantiated in different ways. In the medieval epoch, for example, what is present at hand is

the thing *qua* created. In such a worldview, there is the possibility of interpreting man as the

created effect of God as cause, which is a distortion of the medieval notion of createdness. Yet

man's creation by God, and in God's image, remains an essential part of the worldview,

preserving man's uniqueness even if in a derivative and inauthentic way. Technology is

different, however: in the technological world, present-at-hand things are mere accumulations of

resources, and nothing more; no divinity, no uniqueness, to be found in any respect. An

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[331] *Mindfulness* 138.
[332] *Being and Time* 168.

inauthentic interpretation of man, then, takes man as a mere thing like other things. But as such,

he is something to be reckoned with, to manipulate, to control, to be counted, and perhaps to

satisfy in the manner of Nietzsche's last man.[333] This is an order of magnitude beyond

inauthenticity in the medieval epoch: there is no room for any interesting role for a thing, any

deeper grasp of its meaning and possibilities, beyond manipulation of its forces.

Such is the first special danger of technology. But not only is man taken up into the

ordering of technology; technology, unlike other forms of inauthenticity, utterly dominates over

all other forms of revealing. Technology takes itself to be not only the most important, but the

sole arbiter of what it is to exist and be part of a world. All other forms of revealing, be they

those of literature, myth, history, and so on, are rejected as irrational and false. Anselm and

Aquinas, writing about God, took both argument and faith to be ways in which God could be

understood; they did not posit logical argument as being supreme or alone, but nor did they think

argument was nothing: as Anselm says, "I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I

believe in order to understand."[334] Belief comes first, but understanding is not false, or sinful, or

to be avoided. One expects that even those in Anselm's time who might misinterpret him, and

take his argument to be providing some sort of privileged knowledge of God, would think that

there is more to God than what arguments say, that e.g. salvation, judgment, and the like are

important to understanding God, even if they are the realm of revelation not argument.[335]

Technology, on the other hand, with science as its handmaiden and mathematical physics as the

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[333] Heidegger points to this in *Being and Time* as well, as seen above in his discussion of death. In *Being and Time*, however, he does not distinguish clearly between the particular historical aspects and the more generalized aspects of his account. More on this in the Conclusion.

[334] Anselm 7.

[335] Typically, at least. As was just argued, inauthenticity is certainly possible. Where technology is differing is in its power of compulsion; it takes a gross misunderstanding of the medieval worldview to take a single form of understanding as all-encompassing, whereas technology genuinely presses a single view in this way, for Heidegger.

exemplary science, decides on its own what is true and what is not by deciding what it means to be true at all. Technological thinking takes itself to provide the exclusive ground of truth.[336]

To see how technology becomes supreme in this way, and what standard of truth it offers, one can look back to the philosopher who, more than any other, spurred the modern era, and who for Heidegger has a special place in Western history: Descartes. In the *Meditations*, Descartes says that I never see an actual thing, such as a piece of wax. For the qualities that I perceive in the wax change; how could the shape, the color, the size of the wax be true aspects of the piece wax, if they can change and yet the same piece of wax remains? What is essential to the piece of wax must be what always belongs to the wax so long as it is that particular piece of wax. Because all that we learn about the wax via sensation can change while the piece of wax itself remains the same thing, Descartes concludes that if I know what the wax is, then that knowing includes "nothing of all that I observe by means of the senses, since all the things that fell under taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing are changed, and yet the same wax remains."[337] But if it is not the senses, then, "it is the mind alone (*mens*, Lat., *entendement*, F.) which perceives"[338] the wax, and by analogy any real thing. Since, according to Descartes, what belongs essentially to a thing is what belongs to that thing through all of its changes, the mind can grasp the essence of the wax only "when I distinguish the wax from its exterior forms, and when, as if I had stripped it of its vestments, I consider it quite naked."[339] Real objects, as a result, are objects stripped of anything about them that changes, which includes any and every sensible quality of an object. Even when Descartes goes on to prove that external objects exist, he argues that they cannot

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[336] A point that Braver recognizes: see, for instance, Braver 299.
[337] Descartes, Rene. *The Method, Meditations, and Selections from the Principles of Descartes*, Fourteenth Edition, trans. J. Veitch (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1907) 111.
[338] *Meditations* 112.
[339] *Meditations* 113.

exist as we typically perceive them. Things, he says in passage that Heidegger would think

pivotal in the history of Western thought,

> are not perhaps exactly as we perceive by the senses, for their comprehension by the senses
> is, in many instances very obscure and confused; but it is at least necessary to admit that all
> which I clearly and distinctly conceive as in them, that is, generally speaking, all that is
> comprehended in the object of speculative geometry, really exists externally to me.[340]

What really exist in the world are things, but only in those respects and possessing those qualities

which can be grasped by speculative geometry, that not including qualities such as color, heat,

and so on. Those apparent features of reality are not truly out there as part of the objects, but just,

so to speak, in our heads; only that which meets the standard of speculative geometry as a

mathematical science, things which are described 'clear and distinct' as opposed to 'obscure and

confused,' can be considered to be part of external reality. The world of things is taken to exist

in one and one sense only, whereas all other interpretations of reality are not just uncertain,

fuzzy, or incomplete, but utterly mistaken. Speculative geometry, in this way, as what is truly

clear and distinct (i.e., what can be calculated—the link to calculability needs no big interpretive

leap here) becomes the universal standard for what is real; This is an especially strong version of

what happens when public interpretation and idle talk takes over in *Being and Time*, such that it

"has already been decisive even for the possibilities of having a mood—that is, for the basic way

in which Dasein lets the world "matter" to it. [*Das Man*] prescribes one's state-of-mind, and

determines what and how one 'sees'."[341] Though most people are not speculative geometers, all

people in the epoch of technology can still grasp the world in terms discrete resources to be used

for discrete, measurable ends, even when it comes to their own lives, as Heidegger discusses in

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[340] *Meditations* 159.
[341] *Being and Time* 213.

Mindfulness; after all, what else is there, one might ask, but quantities of matter and force in motion according to laws? Things are just matter, and we can use that to produce energy or solve problems, all in the most efficient way. Isn't everything else poetry and superstition?

The epoch of technology, then, represents both one instantiation of inauthenticity among others and a uniquely insidious one, which helps to make more sense of the question of whether inauthenticity is historical, transhistorical, or ahistorical. Following the hint given in *Mindfulness* about misinterpretation of the idea of creation, and the fuller discussion of the passage from "The Question Concerning Technology," it can be said with confidence that inauthenticity is a transhistorical phenomenon in Heidegger's thought, technology being as a a uniquely powerful historical manifestation of it. As the example of medieval views of God showed, what Heidegger calls inauthenticity in *Being and Time* cannot be isolated to the epoch of technology alone, even in his later work. However, Heidegger also makes it clear that technology has a peculiar status among forms of inauthenticity, one that poses a unique threat, thus implying that inauthenticity manifests itself in sometimes very different ways in different historical epochs.[342] In *Being and Time*, it appears as though Heidegger takes inauthenticity as a timeless phenomenon, always being the way it is; it is, after all, the way Dasein is "proximally and for the most part." As pointed out previously, however, Heidegger's actual language remains either ambiguous or inexplicit in distinguishing between transhistorical and ahistorical readings, and on closer examination it was seen that inauthenticity is transhistorical. But to say that inauthenticity is transhistorical does not mean that history has no say in how inauthenticity develops, or what becomes of it. When Heidegger describes newspapers as the prime example of idle talk in the written medium in *Being and Time*, he is not using a timeless example; it is one that can be dated

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[342] Again, recall the passage from *Being and Time* 167: "The extent to which [*das Man*'s] dominion becomes compelling and explicit may change in the course of history."

to a specific point in history, before which inauthentic communication in writing was, at best, not possible at nearly the scale it is now.Thus, even in *Being and Time* the account of inauthenticity makes reference to specific historical developments that can shift the scope and specific manifestations of inauthenticity. Nevertheless, after *Being and Time* there does appear to be a shift in Heidegger's interest: with the introduction of technology, his interest unambiguously turns to the contemporary epoch and its form of inauthenticity. Yet the fact that technology shares all the features of inauthenticity does not mean that *das Man* and all that goes with it suddenly become mere phenomena of the contemporary moment, but rather that the features of inauthenticity, including *das Man*, must be addressed as they appear in actual historical circumstances, and they appear to us today in the form of technological thinking.

4.4 WHO SAVES US?

Inauthenticity and technology have been discussed at length. What of of authenticity and mindfulness? And what of the transitional role played by anxiety or the distress at the lack of distress? Starting with anxiety, which comes next in conceptual order, the two addenda to "What Is Metaphysics?" help supplement the picture. According to these addenda, anxiety, ostensibly understood in the same way as in *Being and Time* and "What is Metaphysics?" is the proper reaction to what Heidegger in the 1940s begins to call 'the oblivion of Being.' The oblivion of Being, in brief, is the loss of awareness of "the primordial relation of Being to the human essence."[343] Recalling what was said earlier in this chapter about Being and the human essence, this means that man loses touch with his particular historical form of Being-in-the-world, which is to say, with the proper relation to his historical possibilities. "If," Heidegger asks, "the

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[343] *Pathmarks* 281, footnotes removed.

oblivion of Being that has been described here should be our situation, would there not be

occasion enough for a thinking that recalls Being to experience a genuine horror? What can such

thinking do other than to endure anxiously this destiny of Being, so as first of all to bring the

oblivion of Being to bear upon us?"[344] Anxiety to the point of horror is the proper attitude

towards the current epoch in which man's primordial relation to his Being-in-the-world is hidden

from him, and this absence is in its turn hidden from him: "What if the absence of Being

abandoned man more and more exclusively to beings, leaving him forsaken . . . , while this

forsakenness itself remained veiled."[345] Compare the veiling of man's forsakenness to the lack in

'distress at the lack of distress' in *Mindfulness*: the forsakenness must be brought out into the

open, unveiled to man, as anxiety must be acknowledged by authentic Dasein.

Compare as well this picture to that given by Heidegger at the end of his career, in his

1966 interview with *Der Spiegel*. What starts as an interview about Heidegger's Nazi affiliations

becomes a wide-ranging discussion of the modern era, one of his last, where Heidegger lays out

his positions not *ex cathedra* but in dialogue with two interviewers. At one point, Heidegger

brings up and considers an objection to the view that we are being controlled by technology,

namely, that things are going well in the modern age; production is increasing, things are

working, men are employed. What, then, is there to be afraid of in the age of technology?

"Everything is functioning," Heidegger says in response. "This is exactly what is so uncanny,

that everything is functioning and that the functioning drives us more and more to even further

functioning, and that technology tears men loose from the earth and uproots them."[346]

Heidegger's use of 'uncanny' here, where it is followed by uprootedness and being torn loose

from the earth, fits well with his use of the term in *Being and Time*, where, recall, uncanniness is

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[344] *Pathmarks* 281-2.
[345] *Pathmarks* 281.
[346] *Philosophical and Political Writings* 37.

the feeling of being not at home (*unheimlich*), of being unsettled, and in this way is the state of

mind of anxiety. (In "Building Dwelling Thinking," from the 1950s, Heidegger links dwelling,

as the proper way of living in the world, and preservation of the earth, earth understood in a way

closer to being at home than to the dirt beneath our feet: "we reflect that human being consists in

dwelling and, indeed, dwelling in the sense of the stay of mortals on the earth."[347]) In the *Der

Spiegel* quotation, the continuous, unimpeded functionality of technology is opposed to the

rootedness of man, to his connection to the earth; modern man is functioning but uprooted, and

this uprootedness in the face of a successfully functioning world is what is uncanny. The

uncanniness described here is not a concern with any specific process or event, because

everything is functioning, which is to say that everything works as intended: "We have peak

production. Men in the highly technological parts of the world are well provided for. We live in

prosperity."[348] It's what that functionality is doing to us that is uncanny; it tears us from our

roots. Because everything works so well, this uncanniness is not explicitly noticed. But that

uncanniness can become a threat to our current sense of progress, can call it into question. As

Heidegger says in 1927, uncanniness, which is "a threat to [Dasein's] everyday lostness in [*das

Man*] . . . , can go together factically with complete assurance and self-sufficiency in one's

everyday concern."[349] If man in the age of technology is being inauthentic, then a lack of concern

for such rootedness would be what man pursues, as something that threatens progress.

Looking to "The Question Concerning Technology," written between the addenda and

the *Der Spiegel* interview, the state in which one should feel uncanny is life when it is under the

spell of of 'the danger,' which "is both nowhere and everywhere. It *has* no place as something

other than itself. It is itself the placeless dwelling place of all presencing. The danger is the epoch

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[347] *Poetry Language Thought* 147.
[348] Ibid.
[349] *Being and Time* 234.

of Being coming to presence as Enframing;"[350] that is, the danger is the modern epoch. One

should feel unsettled not by particular beings (in *Being and Time*, fear is the inauthentic form of

anxiety, one directed to particular beings), but by the epoch of technology, which says that

everything is working well.

As *Being and Time* had it, anxiety and uncanniness must be faced in order for Dasein to

exist authentically. The "Postscript" to "What is Metaphysics?" keeps to this perspective,

arguing that anxiety must brought into the open in order for authentic decisions to be made:

"Readiness for anxiety is a Yes to assuming a stance that fulfills the highest claim, a claim that is

made upon the human essence alone . . . . The lucid courage for essential anxiety assures us the

enigmatic possibility of experiencing being."[351] The oblivion of Being must be acknowledged

and affirmed rather than avoided, so that Being can be recognized. And that acknowledgement is

all that can be done; the destiny of Being which is signified by man's obliviousness to his own

history must be recognized and "brought to bear." Recall that in *Mindfulness*, mindfulness itself

started not with a plan to change the world, but with an awareness that "prepares the decision"

without actually carrying out the decision on its own; mindfulness was preparation for genuine

historical possibilities, not a recognition of what those possibilities are. This motif carries into

the expression that gives the *Der Spiegel* interview its title: "Only a god can save us. The sole

possibility that is left for us is to prepare a sort of readiness, through thinking and poetizing, for

the appearance of the god or for the absence of the god in the time of foundering (*Untergang*);

for in the face of the god who is absent, we founder."[352] The absence of the god, and our

uprootedness, our uncanniness in the god's absence when all is otherwise going well, is the cause

of foundering. We must prepare for its appearance, or alternatively, Heidegger says, for its

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[350] *The Question Concerning Technology* 43.
[351] *Pathmarks* 234.
[352] *Philosophical and Political Writings* 38.

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absence. What is meant here is not initially clear. What, exactly, is the god that will save us? Do preparing for its appearance and preparing for its absence amount to the same thing? If not, what is the difference?

It is safe to assume that Heidegger does not mean by 'god' a *causa efficiens*. The god is what keeps us from foundering, and is what can save us from our age of foundering. It seems fair to suspect that the god is what roots us to the earth in some sense, though that itself must be made clearer. Instead of simply asking what the god is, it may be better to ask what is to be preserved, what prepared for. Heidegger invokes old terms to clarify the preparation:

> S: You have just said that philosophy and the individual are capable of nothing other than . . .
> H: . . . this preparation of the readiness, of keeping oneself open for the arrival of or the absence of the god. Moreover the experience of this absence is not nothing, but rather a liberation of man from what I called "fallenness amidst beings" in *Being and Time*. A meditation on what is today belongs to the preparation of the readiness we referred to.[353]

Preparation requires being open for the arrival of or absence of the god, Heidegger repeats. He goes on to put weight on experiencing the absence; such experience of absence is, directly referencing *Being and Time*, a liberation from the state of fallenness into the world of beings (i.e., being engrossed by them, a general tendency exacerbated by *das Man*), and the associated lostness to Being; in *Being and Time*, such liberation was the role given specifically to anxiety. Part of the readiness, then, includes anxiety about the absence of the god in spite of everything going well, which is another way of distress at the lack of distress. To experience the lack of the god is to experience anxiety. This recognition, Heidegger says further, includes "meditation on what is today," on what defines the current age. As seen above, it is in the essence of technology

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[353] *Philosophical and Political Writings* 39.

that the hope of a saving power, of liberation from the technological epoch, lies; in other words, the current age is one of lostness to technology andof the god's absence (where the former seems to follow from the latter), and looking forward, one might find either the freedom from technology, or the loss of any such possibility. To put it all together, meditation on and awareness of the epoch of technology, which is recognition of man's uprootedness, which is also recognition of the current absence of the god, is how man prepares for the potential arrival of the god. The god appears in this account as the opposite of what uproots us (technology), as what we have lost in our uprooted era and what has the hope of rooting us once more, something we cannot do on our own.[354] But for any of this to happen, man must face the source of anxiety and recognize it as such. Resolute Dasein is anxious, and resolute, anxious man prepares the way for the absence of the god.

At this point one might again offer the familiar objection: is this account of anxiety, and the general account of anxiety since the 1930s, historical in a way that the account from *Being and Time* (as well as "What is Metaphysics?") is not? Anxiety is presented in the later works, according to this objection, as a reaction to the oblivion brought about by technology, which is the circumstance of a specific epoch, rather than as a general feature of man's existence. On the other hand, in *Being and Time* and "What is Metaphysics" authentic Dasein is existentially anxious, which means always anxious: "the originary anxiety in Dasein is usually repressed.

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[354] One might also look at "The Origin of the Work of Art," written in 1935 and revised in 1956. There, in considering a Greek holy temple, Heidegger discusses what the temple's god meant to the Greeks: "By means of the temple, the god is present in the temple . . . . It is the temple-work that first fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the shape of destiny for human being." (*Poetry Language Thought* 40-1.) The god, according to this passage, is a sort of nexus for the Greek system of meanings and possibilities, the Greek *heritage* in Heidegger's sense, the center of Greek Being-in-the-world. It seems right to interpret the god of the *Der Spiegel* interview in the same way—in the absence of an authentic relation to our heritage, our history, we founder, enslaved by it without knowing we are.

Anxiety is there. It is only sleeping."[355] Is anxiety only sleeping in us in the current epoch, or is there something beyond that? Has anxiety lost its status as a universal feature of Dasein in the later works, and become the phenomenon of a particular historical period? It was anxiety that Dreyfus focused on as producing tension with the historical aspects of *Being and Time*; might anxiety, rather than inauthenticity, be where a transhistorical interpretation breaks down?

In the "Postscript" to "What is Metaphysics?" Heidegger repeats a basic claim about anxiety from the original lecture, that "Without being, whose abyssal but yet to be unfolded essence dispenses the nothing to us in essential anxiety, all beings would remain in an absence of being."[356] In "What is Metaphysics?" itself, the function of anxiety is that it "makes manifest the nothing,"[357] and only because the nothing is manifest to us, only because beings are able to slip away and have a distance from us, does Dasein have any relation to beings as beings, and thus to Being: "Human Dasein can comport itself toward beings only if it holds itself out into the nothing."[358] Anxiety, in "What is Metaphysics?" is therefore not just an element of authenticity, but an essential component of being something for whom there are any beings at all, and certainly beings haven't been present to man only in a single epoch. In the "Postscript" Heidegger repeats the claim that anxiety makes manifest the nothing, so that, by way of anxiety, "we must prepare ourselves solely in readiness to experience in the nothing the pervasive expanse of that which gives every being the warrant to be. That is being itself."[359] Recall as well something quoted previously when discussing anxiety in the later works, that "The lucid courage for essential anxiety assures us the enigmatic possibility of experiencing being." Through anxiety we experience being; without it, there would be no beings (since they would have no being; they

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[355] *Pathmarks* 93.
[356] *Pathmarks* 233.
[357] *Pathmarks* 88.
[358] *Pathmarks* 96.
[359] *Pathmarks* 233.

would not 'be' in any particular way for us, would not be taken as something rather than

something else). Anxiety, as in "What is Metaphysics?" provides the distance necessary to

experience beings *as* beings. Without anxiety, no being. Man is always anxious, then, in the later

works as well as the earlier ones, because it remains just as essential for having the experience of

beings, for being man. (It might be more intuitive to say that man is unsettled in all epochs,

capable of existing at a distance from beings, and so taking them *as* something, via the nothing in

all epochs. The point, however, remains the same.)

Finally, what becomes of authenticity, which in the 1930s became mindfulness? In the

"Postscript" Heidegger speaks of what he calls 'essential thinking' as follows:

> That thinking whose thoughts not only cannot be calculated, but are in general
> determined by that which is other than beings, may be called essential thinking. Instead
> of calculatively counting on beings by means of beings, it expends itself in being for the
> truth of being. Such thinking responds to the claim of being, through the human being
> letting his historical essence be responsible to the simplicity of a singular necessity . . . .
> The need is for the truth of being to be preserved, whatever may happen to human beings
> and to all beings . . . . Sacrifice is the departure from beings on the path to preserving the
> favor of being . . . . Its accomplishment stems from that inherent stance [*Instandigkeit*]
> out of which every historical human being through action – and essential thinking is an
> action – preserves the Dasein he has attained for the preservation of the dignity of
> being.[360]

'Essential thinking' takes the place of 'mindfulness' in the 1940s and is used through to the end.

Heidegger opposes essential thinking to mere calculative thought of the kind epitomized by

technology, which he describes in the passage above as thought in the sense of "calculatively

counting on beings by means of beings," similar to the "absorption in the world . . . [in terms of]

what is present at hand within the world"[361] found in *Being and Time*'s discussion of *das Man*.

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[360] *Pathmarks* 236-7.
[361] *Being and Time* 168.

As opposed to the technological way of grasping the world, essential thinking responds to "that which is other than beings," i.e., to Being itself. It responds to Being, not to beings, in terms of the truth of Being, i.e., of man's Being-in-the-world. Recalling once again what Being-in-the-world is, essential thinking is a response to man's history, a response to the oblivion of Being in the current historical epoch and thus a response to anxiety—the passage ends with a reference to "the clarity of the awe, *ready for anxiety*, that belongs to the courage of sacrifice."[362]

In the passage above, man is said to be responsible specifically in terms of "his historical essence." That man's essence is historical follows simply enough from man being a being that is always in a world with historically determined possibilities, a historical being, a point made in *Being and Time* though given little emphasis until late in the work. A brief recap: in *Being and Time*, because Dasein is always in a historical, factical Situation, authentic Dasein is responsible for his historicity, and authentically takes it on in destiny. It is only in a historical Situation that an authentic decision about Dasein's possibilities can be made, and those possibilities are limited by what that Dasein's heritage is. Thus, according to *Being and Time* the possibilities open to authentic Dasein do not equate to a simple free choice, but to "the power of its finite freedom, so that . . . it can take over the *powerlessness* of abandonment [to its having made a choice], and can thus have a clear vision for the accidents of the Situation that has been disclosed."[363] Dasein chooses its history, which means accepting the possibilities that have come down to it, though they are not of its choosing.

In the 1962 lecture "On Time and Being," Heidegger elaborates further on the role of history in thinking. "Thinking," he says there, "remains bound to the tradition of the epochs of the destiny of Being, even when and especially when it recalls in what way and from what source

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[362] *Pathmarks* 237. Emphasis mine.
[363] *Being and Time* 436.

Being itself receives its appropriate determination."[364] Thinking is a confrontation with the destiny of Being, which is to say the ways in which Being is understood in the different historical epochs. For example, thinking in medieval era would not simply think about God, but move beyond God as a particular being to createdness itself as the fundamental way of being real, as what gives things their significance. In the modern era, on the other hand, man must confront the essence of technology as Enframing and how that determines what it means to be real for the current epoch. Heidegger refers to these epochs as 'the history of Being:' "The history (*Geschichte*) of Being means destiny (*Geschick*) of Being in whose sendings (*Schicken*) both the sending and the It which sends forth hold back with their self-manifestation."[365] The "history of Being," of which much fuss is made in the secondary literature, is basically the various understandings of the world as they manifest in history, each of which must be confronted by those who are in it. History itself is a series of sendings from Being, where 'sending' is once again the translation of *schicken*, related to "destiny" as *Geschick*. Thinking meditates on the unthought essence of its particular epoch, questioning what grounds the meaning of Being of that epoch; for the contemporary age, thinking must confront the essence of technology, which is the source of the uprootedness that defines this epoch. This thinking prepares the way for the rooting of man once again.

The result is a sacrifice of beings (i.e., the letting go of beings, the "liberation from the 'fallenness from beings'" Heidegger speaks of in the *Der Spiegel* interview) for the sake of being, "for the preservation of the dignity of being." Man, as historical, must confront the essence of his epoch. Thus, the response to technology is essential thinking, which is anxious about the loss of being in this epoch. In anxiety, man finds himself turning away from the

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[364] Heidegger, Martin. *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1972) 9-10.
[365] *On Time and Being* 8.

preoccupation with beings (including, in the current age, objectivity as the standard of reality) towards the preservation of being, leading to a historically-minded stance against calculation.

In *Being and Time* destiny makes an appearance, though it is not described as the history of Being. There it is defined instead as "the historizing of the community, of a people,"[366] as opposed to the individual historizing of fate. 'Fate,' for its part, disappears from the discussion in the 1930s, and its absence persists here. To understand why this is, recall the somewhat unclear relationship between fate and destiny and *Being and Time*, in addition to the unclear explanation of the terms themselves. Fate was Dasein handing itself its own heritage; but at the same time, "if fateful Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, exists essentially in Being-with Others, its historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative for it as destiny [*Geschick*]." So Dasein hands itself its heritage, which is fate, but its historizing (its handing itself its heritage) is at the same time historizing with others, which is destiny. Dasein is always Being-with, so fate is, in some way, always destiny. Can fate and destiny come apart? Is there any concrete difference between the two? Can Dasein, for instance, accept its fate without authentic co-historizing? If authentic history is something that involves one's heritage, and a heritage is always shared, that possibility is difficult to make sense of. On the other hand, can a people accept its destiny without the particular individuals who constitute that people accepting their fate? By the 1940s these issues are not answered, but rather dissolved, by dropping 'fate' altogether as a separate concept in favor of destiny. Man, in these later works, must acknowledge his destiny. But this destiny is the history of Being, which includes man's Being-in-the-world, which includes man's Being-with Others. This must be done, as the quotation above says, by "every historical human being," and originary thinking is the act of particular thinkers, as in the account of fate. Yet Heidegger also says of originary thinking that it "is attentive to the truth of being and thus helps the being of

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[366] *Being and Time* 436.

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truth to find its site within historical mankind."[367] The thinker, seeking the truth of being, i.e., the

ground of the historical epoch, is always working to help the being of truth (the happening of

truth, the way in which the world manifests) to "find its site within historical mankind," to help

to bring about the recognition of the epoch and the possibilities therein. What was represented by

'fate' was the individual's authentic grasping of history; this is maintained in the fact that the

thinker, i.e., the individual thinker, must embrace history, like the grounders in *Mindfulness*. But

to think on history is to bring it to the fore, so that "a particular humankind,"[368] or historical

mankind, may recognize it. 'Destiny' was the co-historizing aspect of Dasein's historicity; it is

incorporated into essential thinking by saying that part of essential thinking includes bringing (or

attempting to bring) a Dasein's people into recognition of the history of Being. There can still be

a distinction between an individual grasping his destiny and his entire people grasping it, but

there is no separate concept; the essential thinker works to help others to think essentially as

well, as part of his essential thinking; if Being-in-the-world is Being-with Others, and essential

thinking properly grasps this fact, there can be no other way of essential thinking.

The introduction of the history of Being helps fill in what is left over in the account of

destiny. The history of Being is the history of Being's sendings, which is to say man's

destinings, which is to say epochs, which is to say the different ways in which historical peoples

experience the world, i.e., their possibilities. The history of Being persists beyond individual

persons even as a collective; it is the commonly shared fundamental experience of beings *qua*

Being of a given time and place. When man grasps his heritage, he grasps something that

transcends both himself and the collected members of those in his culture, race, or nationality; he

grasps the sending of Being, the current understanding of the world, in terms of its source in his

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[367] *Pathmarks* 237.
[368] *Pathmarks* 236.

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history, his heritage. To grasp this heritage, as a passage from the "Postscript" suggests, includes helping to make a site for it, to bring it into the common experiential sphere, to speak about it, reveal it, and make it manifest to others. 'Fate' actually does appear as a term, but it is now used to describe the mistaken understanding of destiny as a sort of brute determinism: "Always the destining of revealing holds complete sway over man. But that destining is never a fate that compels."[369] In *Being and Time*, it is not clear how authentic Dasein could relate authentically to history as an individual; it must encounter its Situation, and that includes *das Man* and all else that constitutes Dasein's facticity. The introduction there of the separate term 'fate' to describe Dasein handing its heritage down to itself, as though that could happen separately from handing down destiny, introduces confusion, and saying things like "Dasein's fateful destiny"[370] doesn't help matters. Further, merely defining destiny as not being a collection of individual fates says nothing positively about what destiny *is*. Eliminating 'fate' as a separate term, and explaining more clearly the role of history in destiny via the history of Being, provides a positive account of destiny and what authentic historizing amounts to, one that reconciles individual and group. In the language of *Being and Time*: authentic historicity is a reckoning, in anticipatory resoluteness, with Dasein's factical Situation, one determined by Dasein's history, which always includes the shared tradition Dasein is a part of. In later language: Thinking is the meditation by man on his historical destiny and that of his people in the history of Being, in which Being destines man to a particular epoch. In the cases of inauthenticity and technology, of authenticity and thinking, history plays an essential and identical role in both.

The language of *Being and Time* has, of course, been replaced by more historically sensitive language, and technology provides the appearance of distinctly contemporary concerns

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[369] *The Question Concerning Technology* 25.
[370] *Being and Time* 436.

in the 1940s and 1950s (as well as the 1930s) on Heidegger's part. But even granting that there is

a new role for history in the terminology, it is newly historical in what sense? According to

supporters of the strong *Kehre* reading, the change that occurs is in terms of the role of history in

the account itself. *Being and Time*, following the strong reading, describes authenticity as taking

no regard of history, whereas in the later work history is everything. What has emerged,

however, is that insofar as history "permeates everything" in the later work, as Braver says, it is

not because *Being and Time*'s version of authenticity avoids contact with Dasein's history, as

Braver and many others argue. Rather, something else is going on as the form of inauthenticity

peculiar of the modern era moves to the fore, and the description of authenticity in terms that

depict a more general (though never ahistorical) phenomenon seems to recede. What that

something might be I will discuss in the Conclusion; for now, however, the discussion of

activism and passivism remains incomplete and must be addressed.

4.5 *GELASSENHEIT* AND MYSTICAL DISUNION

In a 1955 memorial address given in his hometown, Heidegger touches on many of the

fundamental concepts seen so far in the discussion of authenticity in this period—he speaks of

technology, of groundlessness (the lack of a god) in the age of technology, and of what in the

address he calls meditative thinking as opposed to technological thinking. While explaining

meditative thinking, he also offers a brief description of the particular stance or comportment

which meditative thinking takes with regard to the products of technology. Meditative thinking is

not a denial of technological things, for such things are an inevitable part of our lives now;

Heidegger does not aim to turn back the clock. (Besides, technological devices are not the

essence of the epoch of technology anyway, as previously discussed.) This ideal stance both

accepts the existence and usefulness of technological devices and denies them control over our

lives: "We can affirm the unavoidable use of technical devices, and also deny them the right to

dominate us, and so to warp, confuse, and lay waste our nature."[371] Heidegger has a name for

this stance, a term that is of some importance: "I would call this comportment toward technology

which expresses "yes" and at the same time "no," by an old word, *releasement toward things*."[372]

'Releasement' is the translation of '*Gelassenheit*,' which will remain untranslated from

here on for reasons to be explained shortly. '*Gelassenheit*' is also the title of a 1959 book

(translated into English under the title "*Discourse on Thinking*"—I will identify the book by its

English title, so as to prevent confusion with the concept discussed here and in that book) that

includes the memorial address just quoted, as well as a 1944-5 dialogue where the concept of

Gelassenheit plays a central role. *Gelassenheit*, as Heidegger's main term in this period for the

authentic, mindful comportment towards technology, is central for any discussion of the activism

issue in Heidegger's late works, which is what I now turn to.

The term also, however, carries special connotations of its own, connotations which lend

themselves to the reading of the later Heidegger as a mystic. In particular, one cannot properly

discuss *Gelassenheit* in Heidegger without discussing *Gelassenheit* in works of the thirteenth-

century German mystic Meister Eckhart, a man who Heidegger himself makes specific and

significant references to. As the charge of mysticism is usually imputed to Heidegger in the time

period currently under discussion, and mysticism is generally taken to be a passive, receptive

orientation (at the least, interpreters of Heidegger as a mystic associate the two), discussing

Heidegger's relation to mysticism is one way of orienting the active-passive discussion in this

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[371] *Discourse on Thinking* 54.
[372] Ibid.

chapter, one with the benefit of addressing the frequent claim that Heidegger becomes a mystic or pseudo-mystic by the end of his life. Is this claim accurate? If so, what sort of mystic is Heidegger, and how does that relate to his earlier work? If not, how does he differ from mysticism and particularly from Eckhart, to whom Heidegger imputes such importance?

Jumping off from the above questions, the following discussion will be oriented around mysticism as it relates to *Gelassenheit*. First, some sign should be given of the importance of Eckhart for Heidegger, which Heidegger's own words on Eckhart make clear. A brief discussion of Eckhart's actual views shows that Heidegger is not off the mark, either, as there are many important connections between the two. But Heidegger also has a very specific criticism to make of Eckhart in *Discourse on Thinking*, one that reveals his point of separation from Eckhart and mysticism more generally. Heidegger is not a mystic, I will argue, because he has no notion of mystical union or of anything to unite with—there is no *thing*, strictly speaking, not even something like Eckhart's 'God beyond God,' for man to come into union with, and there is no divine will with which to align oneself. Further, in a point more directly relevant to the issue of activism, Heidegger's position is not passive; he maintains the limited activism of *Being and Time*. As Heidegger says himself in the same dialogue, *Gelassenheit* is not a matter of denying one's will for some other will, not even that of Being. *Gelassenheit*, and authenticity more generally, is an activity one takes on oneself, though not in terms of either the approval or denial of one's will or desires—in fact, Heidegger says, it is the very resoluteness of *Being and Time* that describes that active element of *Gelassenheit*, thus filling in the picture of how the third, weakest form of activism is still central in the last years.

Heidegger makes only occasional references mysticism in his lectures and writings, and when he does, it is often through the lens of Meister Eckhart, who himself is rarely mentioned. Eckhart, a medieval Christian theologian, appears to be the mystic who Heidegger takes as the best exemplar of mysticism itself, and his few direct references to Eckhart are often as weighty and generally positive as they are fleeting. For now I will cite only one, which both comes in the period under investigation and shows how important Heidegger takes Eckhart to be. In a 1957 lecture series titled *The Principle of Reason*, Heidegger is discussing an apparent counterexample to the principle of sufficient reason offered by the mystic poet Angelus Silesius. Leibniz claimed, in brief, that everything that is, has a reason; Silesius, who was both Leibniz' contemporary and influenced by Eckhart, writes on the contrary that "The rose is without why, it blooms because it blooms,/It pays no attention to itself, asks not whether it is seen."[373] The details of the discussion are not important here; after explaining that Silesius' verses make a subtle distinction about the nature of reasons which is clarified in the second verse, Heidegger comments that, "The entire fragment is so astoundingly clear and neatly constructed that one is inclined to get the idea that the most extreme sharpness and depth of thought belongs to the genuine and great mystics. This is also true. Meister Eckehart [*sic*] proves it."[374] Coming from Heidegger, this is no small praise.

Heidegger takes (genuine and great) mysticism to be of real significance, and Eckhart as the (presumably genuine and great) exemplar. Given the oft-heard claim that Heidegger is, if not a full mystic, at least quasi-mystical, this should not be too surprising. The connection to Eckhart in particular, though, comes to be of special importance when one considers *Gelassenheit*. As mentioned above, Heidegger takes *Gelassenheit* to be the comportment definitive of meditative

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[373] Quoted in Heidegger, Martin. *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991) 36.
[374] *The Principle of Reason* 36-7.

thinking, the comportment that responds properly to technology. Eckhart also uses the term 'Gelassenheit,' though in English translations of Eckhart it is typically rendered as 'detachment' (Heidegger knows that he is using Eckhart's term, which is why I stick to the German term in both; there should be no difference implied by different English terms). Heidegger himself claims to take mysticism, and Eckhart in particular, seriously, and he and Eckhart share this key term. How close are Heidegger's and Eckhart's versions of *Gelassenheit*?

Closer than a skeptic might expect. *Gelassenheit*, says one of the speakers in the dialogue portion of "Discourse on Thinking," is not a matter of willing. In fact, it is something that has to be let in, something that comes to us, provided that we are open to it in the right way:

> Scholar: So far as we can wean ourselves from willing, we contribute to the awakening of [*Gelassenheit*].
> Teacher: Say rather, to keeping awake for [*Gelassenheit*].
> Scholar: Why not, to the awakening?
> Teacher: Because on our own we do not awaken [*Gelassenheit*] in ourselves.
> Scientist: Thus [*Gelassenheit*] is effected from somewhere else.
> Teacher: Not effected, but let in.[375]

Several features of *Gelassenheit* appear in the above quotation. First, *Gelassenheit* is not something willed or brought about by us, but allowed in. Second, the allowing is something that we prepare for—while we do not enact *Gelassenheit*, we in some way prepare ourselves for it to become our state (recall from the *Der Spiegel* interview that we do not bring about the god that saves us—we only prepare the readiness to receive it, should it come). Third, *Gelassenheit* comes from outside of us. In sum, *Gelassenheit* is a state that comes from outside of us that we do not will into existence, but that we prepare for by opening ourselves up to receive it.

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[375] *Discourse on Thinking* 60-1.

Where does *Gelassenheit* come from, if not us? *Gelassenheit*, the speakers in the dialogue agree, is a form of waiting (which makes sense, since it cannot be willed), where "waiting means: to [*gelasst*, 'release'] oneself into the openness of that-which-regions."[376] What is that-which-regions? "That-which-regions is an abiding expanse which, gathering all, opens itself, so that in it openness is halted and held, letting everything merge in its own resting."[377] That-which-regions is the open space or horizon within which everything comes to rest, which means comes to be that which it on its own is—it is that wherein things appears as things. That-which-regions itself withdraws as something explicitly known, so that those things within it can come to the forefront as they are. Simply enough, and putting the linguistic gymnastics aside, that-which-regions is Being, i.e., that which allows beings to be the particular beings that they are. *Gelassenheit* is openness to Being, and Being, recall, is really the history of epochal sendings of Being, the different ways in which the Being of particular entities is understood.[378] *Gelassenheit* is openness to the history of Being, so that man can be released [*gelassen*] towards his particular historical epoch. Man cannot force such an opening to happen, cannot decide whether to be released [*gelasst*] or not: "Scholar: If authentic [*Gelassenheit*] is to be the proper relation to that-which-regions, and if this relation is determined solely by what it is related to, then authentic [*Gelassenheit*] must be based upon that-which-regions, and must have received from it movement toward it."[379] Thus, on man's part there can only be a waiting. Finally, thinking itself, as the authentic activity which has *Gelassenheit* as its comportment, is likewise

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[376] *Discourse on Thinking* 72.
[377] *Discourse on Thinking* 66.
[378] The role of history is not discussed in the dialogue itself; it does, however, have a place in the memorial address that accompanies the dialogue, and the dialogue would be a singularly remarkable aberration if that-which-regions were not fundamentally historical. Thus, history can and should be read into the discussion here.
[379] *Discourse on Thinking* 73.

dependent on that-which-regions, or Being: "the nature of thinking lies, if I may say so, in the

regioning of [*Gelassenheit*] by that-which-regions."[380]

This is the basic picture of *Gelassenheit* in Heidegger: does Eckhart differ? The answer

is, seemingly not much. At first blush, Eckhart may appear to be something of an ascetic as many

mystics do, for he says of *Gelassenheit* that "all other virtues have some regard for created

things, but [*Gelassenheit*] is free from all created things."[381] One would think, then, that

Eckhart's *gelasst* person must give up all material goods for the sake of better, divine goods. But

Eckhart's notion of createdness is not limited to material or finite objects, and the *gelasst* person

does not simply reject the world of creation for the divine world. *Gelassenheit*, for Eckhart, goes

altogether beyond the distinction between created and divine. Our essential core, which Eckhart

calls the 'spark' of the divine, does reject created things, but also far more than that:

> This spark rejects all created things, and wants nothing but its naked God, as he is in himself.
> It is not content with the Father or the Son or the Holy Spirit, or with the three Persons as far
> as each of them persists in his properties. I say truly that this light is not content with the
> divine nature's generative or fruitful qualities. I will say more, surprising though this is. I
> say in all truth, truth that is eternal and enduring, that this same light is not content with the
> simple divine essence in its repose, as it neither gives nor receives; but it wants to know the
> source of this essence; it wants to go into the simple ground, into the quiet desert, into which
> distinction never gazed—not the Father, nor the Son, nor the Holy Spirit.[382]

It was likely in part because of words like these that Eckhart was accused in his time of heresy:

he rejects that the true God is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, he rejects the Trinity of the three,

and he even rejects a "simple divine essence in its repose." He goes beyond all of those, to

something that is not distinguished as a particular being that is the object of prayer or worship,

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[380] *Discourse on Thinking* 74.
[381] Meister Eckhart. *Meister Eckhart: Selections from His Essential Writings* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1981) 104.
[382] Meister Eckhart 85.

not even one with a divine essence: "if all images are [*gelasst*] from the soul, and it contemplates only the simple One, then the soul's naked being finds the naked, formless being of the divine unity, which is there a being above being, accepting and reposing in itself."[383] Eckhart's God is not a bearded man sitting up in heaven, by all accounts.

When *Gelassenheit* relates to God, therefore, it is not to God *qua* divine or uncreated being. In what sense is God understood? The *gelasst* person sees God in no particular place, but also sees God everywhere. "All created things are God's speech. The being of a stone speaks and manifests the same as does my mouth about God."[384] Even though created things are not the object of desire for *Gelassenheit*, they are still present and important as that through which God's presence is manifested. They speak to God's presence, which is not just figuratively in all things: "The authorities say that God is a being, and a rational one, and that he knows all things. I say that God is neither being nor rational, and that he does not know this or that. Therefore God is free of all things, and therefore he is all things."[385] God is not a being; God's presence is in all things, including in us as the spark of the divine; God allows things to be. God unambiguously holds the same place for Eckhart that Being holds for Heidegger.

How exactly does *Gelassenheit* relate to God, for Eckhart? The person who is properly *gelasst* achieves a mystical union with God—not only is one together with God, the *gelasst* person and God are the same being: "You ought to sink out of all your your-ness, and flow into his his-ness, and your "yours" and his "his" ought to become one "mind," so completely that you with him perceive forever his uncreated is-ness, and his nothingness, for which there is no name."[386] This is the (metaphysically) original state of man, for Eckhart, before there was ever

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[383] Meister Eckhart 97.
[384] Meister Eckhart 95.
[385] Meister Eckhart 90.
[386] Meister Eckhart 99.

any distinction between God and man: "For in the same being of God where God is above being and above distinction, there I myself was; there I willed myself and committed myself to create this man. Therefore I am the cause of myself in the order of my being, which is eternal."[387] *Gelassenheit* is a return to the source of all beings, God, and a union with God as that which is beyond all things.

What does this mystical union mean in practice? What does Eckhart's discussion have to say about activity and passivity? The 'detachment' definitive of Eckhart's *Gelassenheit*, as noted at the start of the discussion, is not an ascetic rejection of worldly things for the sake of divine things. It *is*, however, a rejection of creation *qua* created, including one's created will:

> When a man in obedience goes out of himself and renounces what he possesses, God must necessarily respond by going in there . . . . If I deny my own will, putting it in the hands of my superior, and want nothing for myself, then God must want it for me, and if he fails me in this matter, he will be failing himself."[388]

Gelassenheit is a denial of one's own will for the will of God, which means allowing God to enter into and act through oneself. One opens oneself up to God within via the spark, and God effectively takes over and becomes oneself. "Pure [*Gelassenheit*] reposes in the highest place. If a man has repose in the highest place, God can work in him according to his whole will . . . . [God] cannot work except where he finds or creates a willing cooperation."[389] The person who is *gelasst* in this manner acts not merely like a good or holy person, then, but essentially becomes one with God's will, to the point where God's will and the will of the person are the same: "The

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[387] Meister Eckhart 92.
[388] Meister Eckhart 2.
[389] Meister Eckhart 113.

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just have no will at all; what God wills is all the same to them."[390] Like Aristotle's magnanimous

man, there is no temptation to sin for the person who is *gelasst*; such a person does what is

correct because, being one with God's will, he cannot want anything else:

> So long as a man has this as his will, that he wants to fulfill God's dearest will, he has not the poverty about which we want to talk. Such a person has a will with which he wants to fulfill God's will, and that is not true poverty. For if a person wants really to have poverty, he ought to be as free of his own created will as he was when he did not exist.[391]

One's own will is eliminated, replaced by the will of God, which in our core we are. "But to

submit oneself to God with one's desire and one's heart, to make one's will wholly God's will,

never once to look upon created things—anyone who had so forsaken himself, he would truly be

given back to himself."[392]

For Eckhart, the *gelasst* person goes in her concern beyond created beings (where

'created' here has the broad definition outlined above, basically synonymous with beings in

general) and the will that desires them, uniting with the source of beings that is present in beings

but not itself a being, even a divine one. This person is not only receptive to God's will, but

becomes one with and acts out God's will as his, and his as God's. For Heidegger, the *gelasst*

person goes beyond particular beings to that which grounds them, which can be found through

them but is not itself a being. This person becomes open to Being, carrying out her destiny as

allotted by the history of Being. The similarities are not coincidental.

No doubt Eckhart offers much of value from Heidegger's perspective, such that the

importance Heidegger imputes to him is warranted. Eckhart's understanding of the source of

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[390] Meister Eckhart 65.
[391] Meister Eckhart 87-8.
[392] Meister Eckhart 70-1.

beings as not itself a being, something that he sometimes refers to as a nothingness (as Heidegger does with Being); how the source of beings can be seen in particular beings, though again not as some particular aspect or feature of them; and how the *gelasst* person must transcend not just the created aspect but the *being* aspect of beings, all point to Heidegger's own conception of *Gelassenheit* and how it relates to Being. But once the individual reaches the state of *Gelassenheit*, just what, for Heidegger, would he be uniting with? Whose will does the *gelasst* person carry out? This is the sticking point, and ultimately the foundation for why Heidegger is not a mystic. A further explanation of why will further the discussion of *Gelassenheit* in general, and in particular draw out the ways in which activism remains at this stage in Heidegger's views.

Recall that Heidegger mentions Eckhart several times, always significantly and *generally* positive. Perhaps the most suggestive of the less than uniformly positive mentions in fact appears in the dialogue from *Discourse on Thinking*. The same passage also points the way in the broader discussion of activity and passivity, to be discussed thereafter, and so is worth quoting at length:

> Scholar: To be sure I don't know yet what the word [*Gelassenheit*] means; but I seem to presage that [*Gelassenheit*] awakens when our nature is let-in so as to have dealings with that which is not a willing.
> Scientist: You speak without letup of a letting-be and give the impression that what is meant is a kind of passivity. All the same, I think I understand that it is in no way a matter of weakly allowing things to slide and drift along.
> Scholar: Perhaps a higher acting is concealed in [*Gelassenheit*] than is found in all the actions within the world and in the machinations of all mankind . . .
> Teacher: . . . which higher acting is yet no activity.
> Scientist: Then [*Gelassenheit*] lies—if we may use the word lie—beyond the distinction between activity and passivity . . .
> Scholar: . . . because [*Gelassenheit*] does *not* belong to the domain of the will.
> Scientist: The transition from willing into [*Gelassenheit*] is what seems difficult to me.
> Teacher: And all the more, since the nature of [*Gelassenheit*] is still hidden.
> Scholar: Especially so because even [*Gelassenheit*] can still be thought of as within the domain of will, as is the case with old masters of thought such as Meister Eckhart.
> Teacher: From whom, all the same, much can be learned.

Scholar: Certainly; but what we have called [*Gelassenheit*] evidently does not mean casting off sinful selfishness and letting self-will go in favor of the divine will.[393]

Again there is praise of Eckhart, but the focus of the passage is on a criticism, one for which Eckhart is singled out. The criticism being that Eckhart still thinks of *Gelassenheit* as "within the domain of will," specifically with "letting self-will go in favor of the divine will." Based on what was said above about Eckhart, there seem to be fair grounds for this claim: for Eckhart, after all, one's will and that of God become one and the same.

One might object, however, that Eckhart does not really intend to invoke the will at all. The *gelasst* person does not want to enact God's will, at least not according to any traditional sense of the will; the *gelasst* person simply becomes part of that will, *in whatever sense it is a will*. For it is not as though God is some being who has specific desires which the *gelasst* person then carries out as though they were his own. The true God is not a being, Eckhart says, and so there can't be a will, in the traditional sense, for it to have. The *gelasst* person just is, we might say, liberating himself of all such traces: "in the breaking through, when I come to be free of the will of myself *and of God's will* and of all his works and of God himself, then I am above all created things, and I am neither God nor creature, but I am what I was and what I shall remain, now and eternally."[394] If God is beyond being, then the *gelasst* person is not acting out the will of some agent. The denial of one's own will is the denial of a certain way of regarding beings, one that takes its orientation from created things and the desire for them, much as, for Heidegger, the authentic person does not deny inauthentic things, but inauthenticity as a way of regarding things, as a correct understanding of the world. Heidegger, then, appears to be taking Eckhart as

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[393] *Discourse on Thinking* 60-1.
[394] Meister Eckhart 92. (Emphasis mine.)

a fairly standard ascetic-type mystic here, which not only appears to be a flat-footed misinterpretation, but seems especially unusual given the high place he gives to Eckhart.

But there is a subtler point at work here, for Eckhart's thought, says Heidegger, is in the *domain* of the will, that domain being something Heidegger associates with the history of Western metaphysics.[395] Heidegger, in short, thinks that Eckhart is still trapped within standard metaphysical concepts, though Eckhart goes to great lengths to move beyond them, and is even successful to some extent. Indeed, a specifically Heideggerian case can be constructed for this criticism of Eckhart. While Eckhart says, for example, that God is beyond beings, he also says that "when the free spirit has attained true [*Gelassenheit*], it compels God to its being; and if the spirit could attain formlessness, and be without all accidents, *it would take on God's properties*."[396] What those properties are isn't exactly clear, when God is supposed to be formless. It's certainly not something utterly simplistic—it's not as though Eckhart would say that we take on God's height or hair color. However, at least one such characteristic is the standardly imputed trait of goodness: "Yes, God's will has savor for me only in his unity, where God's peace is for the goodness of all created things . . . . There you must love the Holy Spirit, as he is there, in unity—not in himself, but there where he, alone with God's goodness, has savor in that unity from which all goodness flows out of the overflowing of the goodness of God."[397] God, whatever else cannot be said, is good in some way. But if I were Heidegger, I would then ask whether such goodness has been clarified ontologically. What sense of goodness is this? Is this notion fundamentally a moral one? Is God good like a hearty breakfast is good? What is the

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[395] This should be fairly apparent given the style of Heidegger's opposition to the idea of willing and how it relates to power. Recall the discussion of power and technology in Chapter 3. *Mindfulness*, which was the focus of that discussion, is a good primary reference; to see a discussion closer in time to the works currently being examined, see the 1951-2 lecture course *What is Called Thinking?* and its discussion of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.
[396] Meister Eckhart 108. (Emphasis mine.)
[397] Meister Eckhart 71.

notion of good that underlies both of these notions, what are its foundations? The answer to these questions is negative; Eckhart offers no clarification of God's goodness, or, as Heidegger would frame it, even seems to recognize it as a problem. Eckhart's answer would satisfy the negative theologian, but Heidegger would not at all be satisfied. Eckhart, Heidegger would say, though he seeks to liberate our notion of God from conventional theological and philosophical commitments, does not fully succeed in doing so. He does move forward a great deal, and so receives Heidegger's praise, but still takes some problematic metaphysical baggage with him.

Coming back to the matter of the will, and keeping in mind the point just made, one should ask how for Eckhart we must deny the will, and how that would compare to what Heidegger means by denial of the will. Eckhart thinks that, via *Gelassenheit*, man still operates according to God's notion of goodness, if nothing else. There is a specific way in which to act in accordance with God, and in denying oneself and one's will, one is instead filled with God: "in all things, when I do not want something for myself, God wants it for me."[398] It is God, admittedly the God beyond beings but still God in some way, that acts through, and all but seems to be identical to on some level, the *gelasst* person: "That man carries God in his every work and in every place, and it is God alone who performs all the man's works; for whoever causes the work, to him it belongs more properly and truly than it does to the one who performs it."[399] In many ways, Being for Heidegger appeared to have an identical relationship to man that God does for Eckhart. But just what, if anything, is acting through the *gelasst* man for Heidegger? Here is where the fundamental difference lies, for Being, as Heidegger always says (and as can probably never be stated enough), is not a being. It is not even beyond being, if by 'beyond' one means something higher. Being is the way in which beings are, which is to say it is the historical

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[398] Meister Eckhart 2.
[399] Meister Eckhart 9.

disclosure of the world to historical man. There can be no 'will' to such a thing (so to speak), but there can also not be anything like 'goodness,' 'wanting,' or any other such category. Being is that in virtue of which there are graspable (in any sense whatsoever) categories and concepts, which exist only in their historical manifestations for man. Nothing whatsoever applies to Being. Eckhart says this of God as well, but then he also says that God wants goodness and acts, in whatever capacity that may be.[400] In addition, for Heidegger Being is understood in different ways for man in different periods, something which Eckhart does not allow for God; God is not something changeable.

All of this puts Eckhart in a dilemma from Heidegger's viewpoint, a dilemma that holds for any mystic who argues similarly for a God beyond beings: if that with which we must achieve unity is not a being, how is unity possible?[401] In addition, how can God be said to be, e.g., good, when that which is the source of all beings cannot properly be said to have goodness? Eckhart both wants to have a notion of God that can serve as the subject of unity and possessor of goodness, and wants to have it not be a being in any sense. Holding both of these positions is difficult for any mystic, and Eckhart's language betrays that difficulty. God, being God, is good in *some* respect, and unity with God means wanting goodness in that respect, whatever it is, where 'whatever it is' is all that is needed for the dilemma to arise. But for Heidegger, goodness is only a coherent concept when the meaning of Being is already understood in some way. There

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[400] Does Being act? One might claim so, and cite a litany of passages in Heidegger where the phrasing is something like, "Being discloses . . . ," "Being reveals . . . ," etc. Should one take these literally? Only if one then allows that Being is a being, ignoring Heidegger's constant protestations and the frequent discussions of Being as nothing, as abyss, as *ab-grund*, etc. Simply put, Being does not act, for Heidegger, because things act, and there is no *thing* to act in Being's case. Heidegger would have to contradict himself in a blatant and almost comical manner for this to be his position. What is going on in these cases is more an apparent problem created by the nature of language, which is a fundamental problem for Heidegger—more on that general issue in the Conclusion.

[401] Not to say that there aren't potential solutions—e.g., by dissolving the self into God's oneness and unity, into the lack of distinction—but Heidegger will pose objections like those above. What, in the case of dissolution, is one dissolving oneself into? What is oneness, if not a being in some sense? Is there a notion of oneness, or of unity for that matter, that comes before Being?

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is no such issue with Being for Heidegger, on the other hand, because Being isn't good (or bad, or anything for that matter); Being *is*, which is to say manifests in history through beings, and that's the entire story, front to back. Similarly, there can be no unity with Being, because man is ultimately *a* being, and Being is not. There is no unified acting, willing, or anything of the sort. What could one unify with? Thus Eckhart s is still bound to conventional metaphysical notions of God in spite of himself; he can deny them as a negative theologian can, but can offer nothing else in their place, and so any use of them at all places his view at risk. Insofar as Eckhart stands for Heidegger as the best in mysticism, it is thus fair to say that Heidegger is no mystic.

How does all of this come back to the question of activism? Mysticism is generally considered a passive view, and rightly so; for the mystic, one must let go of one's attachments and desires, and accept or achieve union with whatever is more fundamental. One wills no more. In Eckhart's case, one must *gelasst sich* from created things *qua* createdness and achieve union with the God above God. One's will becomes the same as God's will and no longer acts for oneself. Recall: "If I deny my own will, putting it in the hands of my superior, and want nothing for myself, then God must want it for me."[402] The individual no longer wills anything. If Being has the same relationship to man for Heidegger, then it would be fair to infer that the passive Heidegger and the mystical Heidegger are one and the same. But Heidegger opposes the mystical reading via his criticism of Eckhart, and his specific grounds are centered in the role of the will, which in turn enters the discussion because of the relation between *Gelassenheit* and passivity. Recall the first part of the passage from the dialogue where Eckhart was mentioned:

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[402] Meister Eckhart 2.

> Scholar: Perhaps a higher acting is concealed in [*Gelassenheit*] than is found in all the actions within the world and in the machinations of all mankind . . .
> Teacher: . . . which higher acting is yet no activity.
> Scientist: Then [*Gelassenheit*] lies—if we may use the word lie—beyond the distinction between activity and passivity . . .
> Scholar: . . . because [*Gelassenheit*] does *not* belong to the domain of the will.

Heidegger wants to claim here that *Gelassenheit* is beyond activity and passivity, both of which are understood in terms of the Western metaphysical interpretation of the will in which Eckhart's discussion is trapped. Eckhart would likely argue that this is not so, but then the Heideggerian argument given above could be run with respect to the will as well: how does God act through the *gelasst* person, if not via God's will in some way? Can something that is not a being have a will? And if not, then in what sense is there a God at all?[403]

Gelassenheit, then, is supposed to be neither active nor passive, and yet there is "a higher acting" of some sort in it, an acting which is not activity. This formulation of *Gelassenheit* is not as indecipherable as it appears; Heidegger returns to the topic towards the end of the dialogue, again examining the issue through the lens of the will. There he frames it in more familiar terms, where a distinction is made between the apparently good activity of *Gelassenheit*, and activity as actualization, hearkening back to the discussion of power in *Mindfulness* and the discussions of technology more generally:

> Scholar: Certainly the fact that on the one hand both the regioning with respect to man and the determining of that-which-regions, and on the other hand, all effecting and causing are essentially and mutually exclusive, shows how alien that is to anything pertaining to the will.
> Teacher: For every will wants to actualize, and to have actuality as its element.
> Scientist: Someone who heard us say this could easily get the impression that [*Gelassenheit*] floats in the realm of unreality and so in nothingness, and, lacking all power of action, is a will-less letting in of everything and, basically, the denial of the will to live!

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[403] Those who accused Eckhart of heresy wondered this, which of course is not to imply that their judgment was an accurate or a just one.

Scholar: Do you then consider it necessary to counter this possible misunderstanding by showing in what respect something like power of action and resolve also reign in [*Gelassenheit*]?

Scientist: Yes I do, although I don't fail to recognize that all such names at once misinterpret [*Gelassenheit*] as pertaining to the will.

Scholar: So, for example, one needs to understand "resolve" as it is understood in *Being and Time*: as the opening of [*Dasein*] *particularly* undertaken by him *for* openness.

Teacher: . . . which we think of as that-which-regions.

Action is involved in *Gelassenheit*, though action cannot be understood as some sort of willing. Nor is it a total denial of will in the sense of stopping all living activity. Rather, action must be understood as resolve, i.e., resoluteness, and Heidegger says that resoluteness must be taken specifically as it is in *Being and Time*, "as the opening of man *particularly* undertaken by him *for* openness," where openness is that-which-regions, i.e., Being.

Recall what has been said of *Gelassenheit* so far. It is a form of waiting, a waiting to be awakened by something outside of oneself. It cannot bring about the recognition of Being on its own, so it waits for the regioning of Being itself. The portion just quoted adds that this opening is undertaken by man for Being, and emphasizes that it is done particularly so. Being is understood, as much at this point as at any other point in Heidegger's works, as manifesting through the epochs of Being, through history. *Gelassenheit* is a waiting for Being, or a preparedness for Being's historical advent. This waiting sounds as though it would be passive, Heidegger says in the above passage, but really there is a form of activity in it, an undertaking for openness equivalent to resoluteness in *Being and Time*.

Finally, recall the discussion of resoluteness in *Being and Time* which Heidegger invokes. Resoluteness, it was argued in Chapter 2, is a necessarily historical phenomenon. It grasps Dasein's Situation, which is always historically grounded in Dasein's particular tradition, its history. Therefore, resoluteness is not Dasein creating a unique possibility to pursue; this is as

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true in *Discourse on Thinking* as it was in *Being and Time*. Nor, in *Being and Time*, was it up to Dasein whether or not to recognize that it has possibilities via willing itself into anxiety—anxiety happens to Dasein whether it wants it or not, without Dasein's choosing so. However, there was still a form of activism in resoluteness, via the activity required to persist in acknowleding and pursuing one's possibilities. Dasein, as resolute, must sustain its authentic grasp of the Situation against the temptations of inauthenticity, against falling into the world and *das Man*'s simplifications. Thus, Heidegger says in *Being and Time*, "As resolute, Dasein is already *taking action . . .* [, where] this term must be taken so broadly that "activity" [*Aktivität*] will also embrace the passivity of resistance."[404] Resistance against inauthenticity is one of the key significations of action Heidegger has in mind here, where that resistance is an activity initiated by Dasein for the sake of authenticity.

In *Discourse on Thinking*, Heidegger says of resolve that is is an undertaking, one taken for that-which-regions. In other words, man undertakes in some way the opening of the History of Being. If there is any ambiguity here, it is whether that undertaking is merely the third, weakest form of activism found in *Being and Time* and *Mindfulness*, or actually the second, stronger form of activism with regard to acknowledging one's possibilities in the first place. Since there is no discussion of anxiety in the dialogue, that question is not directly answered there. It is, however, indirectly answered if one recalls the *Der Spiegel* interview, where Heidegger says that man can only bring about a "preparation of the readiness, of keeping oneself open for the arrival of or the absence of the god."[405] The most that man can do, according to the dialogue, is keep awake for *Gelassenheit*; we do not ourselves contribute to its actual awakening. This means that we cannot bring about the recognition of our genuine historical possibilities,

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[404] *Being and Time* 347.
[405] *Philosophical and Political Writings* 39.

because awakening *Gelassenheit* just is awakening the right stance towards those possibilities should they emerge. It is anxiety, distress, or dismay, which is always present in some form, that allows authentic possibilities to be recognized; to keep awake for *Gelassenheit* or be open for it, is to be open to what makes authentic possibilities visible to us. Thus, the undertaking undertaken by man must be the persistence of the *Der Spiegel* interview, the maintained awareness of the possibility of a new beginning, an awareness which, as Heidegger says in *Being and Time*, is active in a way that "will also embrace the passivity of resistance." In Eckhart's mysticism, one opens oneself to God, and God takes action through oneself. For Heidegger there is not God but Being as history, and so there is nothing that will take action through oneself— rather, one must oneself persist resolutely in carrying out historical possibilities. For a mystic who has achieved union with the divine, there is no need for resoluteness. But Heidegger is not a mystic—for him, from *Being and Time* to the end, man must act.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 A CONCLUSION TO *HEIDEGGER'S AUTHENTICITY*

If there is one point against which this study has argued with the most sustained effort, it is the view that *Being and Time* is an individualistic, proto-existentialist work. Throughout that work, history and tradition are not merely one part of authenticity, but essential to it. Along with facing death and the unsettledness of possibilities, to be authentic just is to resolutely face one's history, something that follows from Dasein always being in a world whose possibilities are determined in the context of a specific history. Authenticity in *Being and Time*, to be truly consistent, must be historical. Given that fact, one would expect that Dasein cannot simply invent ahistorical possibilities to pursue, so that the strongest version of activism described in Chapter 1 is out. This still leaves room for other forms of activism, but Heidegger never allows that we choose to bring anxiety upon ourselves. Anxiety, being what it is, is not chosen; it happens to one, comes upon one without choice. We do not choose its occasions, and the things we choose do not occasion it, rather it comes upon us at the time of its choosing. But without any form of activism, there would be no sense in which choice or decision makes sense; Dasein could not choose authenticity, it would just happen or not. Since authenticity is about the relation to choice itself as possibility, and as Dasein is so defined by possibility (and so, in a sense, by the ability to choose), there must be some activism. Thus, a minimal activism remains, that of continuously choosing one's history.

As for the later work, no one disputes the priority history has there. What is important is to show, as it has been if my effort succeeded, that history has the same relation to human beings as history does to Dasein in *Being and Time*. But being so related history does not require that one simply lives out one's history unquestioningly, and so a minimal form of activism can (and should, if there is to be any reason to be concerned that we prepare for anything) remain, the activism of keeping one's history in mind, becoming a 'guardian of Being.' Man is passive in many respects, but not all; there is some room to choose, as there was in *Being and Time*. What man must choose, though, is not a totally free world, nor whether to know the truth; man must choose himself, which is to say his history.

But is all of this convincing? Is it even persuasive? An old philosophy professor of mine impressed (or tried to impress) upon his students the distinction between convincing someone and persuading someone. If someone is convinced, she fully believes and embraces the point in question; she is committed to what convinces her. If someone is merely persuaded, she may accept the point in question, but that does not mean she accepts it full-heartedly; she may even accept it begrudgingly, in spite of herself. Convincing includes a deeper, perhaps emotional, commitment to the point, and may come from many sources, so long as they ground the commitment firmly; persuasion, on the other hand, comes from reasons, pushing one from a stance of doubt or disbelief, and so can conflict with emotions, with what we *want* to believe. Even after two hundred pages, I doubt that I will convince those who disagree with me in this matter. At most, I might hope to persuade them. Why so little, after arguing at such length? The answer has to do with Heidegger himself, or rather how he writes.

Recall my claim that authenticity is a transhistorical concept, meaning that authenticity has features that persist across epochs, but is not something that can exist independently of

historical manifestations. One might think of this by analogy to Aristotelian hylomorphism, which I alluded to once before.[406] Aristotle thinks of ordinary objects as hylomorphs, which is to say conceptually separable in terms of form and matter. For example, form of a plant, what Aristotle calls its soul, is the nutritive faculty: "The soul must," Aristotle says, "be substance *qua* form of a natural body which has life potentially. Substance is actuality. The soul, therefore, will be the actuality of a body of this kind." (*De Anima* I.1)[407] But while the soul of a plant is conceptually separable from the matter, it is not actually so:

> If then we are to speak of something common to every soul, it will be the first actuality of a natural body which has organs. Hence we too should not ask whether the soul and body are one, any more than whether the wax and the impression are one, or in general whether the matter of each thing and that of which it is the matter are one. (*De Anima* II.1)

There is no point in asking whether the soul is separate from the body, whether they are two distinct things; the soul always is the body's actuality, which means the actuality of some body, of some matter, as the imprint belongs to the wax and is not there without it. Yes, one can talk about form, but there is no form that exists without matter; I can talk of a wax imprint, but until I imprint with the wax, it is not there.[408]

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[406] The more I study Heidegger, the more I find that one rarely errs in alluding to Aristotle. One might say of Heidegger what Heidegger said of Nietzsche: "From all that has here been suggested, it should be clear that one cannot read Nietzsche in a haphazard way; that each one of his writings has its own character and limits; and that the most important works and labors of his thought . . . make demands to which we are not equal. It is advisable, therefore, that you postpone reading Nietzsche for the time being, and first study Aristotle for ten to fifteen years." (Heidegger, Martin. *What is Called Thinking?* trans. Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968) 73. Aristotle's influence on Heidegger is no small matter, and however much attention it has received heretofore is not sufficient.
[407] Translations of Aristotle from *A New Aristotle Reader*, ed. J. L. Ackrill (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) 165.
[408] This being Aristotle, there are of course places where Aristotle says otherwise. The prime mover(s) appears to be one example, and sometimes he seems to say that the soul, as form, can exist without the body. But the issue can be essentially dodged by noting that Aristotle's hylomorphism is used here as an analogy (one that Heidegger could have been aware and made use of, though that's not even necessary); whether that is Aristotle's view is not, in a sense, actually important here.

Consider the existential analysis in *Being and Time* in this regard. As an example, it is true that Dasein is characterized by mineness. But mineness is not some metaphysical *thing*, such as a structure, that exists apart from Dasein; to say that Dasein is characterized by mineness is to say that "we *are* it, each of us, we ourselves."[409] Yes, one can talk about the structural feature of mineness, and every Dasein has that feature, but that does not imply that there is in any way a mineness independent of Daseins who are their own selves, who have that mineness. To say that each Dasein has mineness is to say that each and every Dasein is uniquely its own; it is its mineness, the particular mineness it is, and to not be such would to no longer be mineness. There are thus two ways in which one can talk about Dasein's mineness: the first refers (in *Being and Time*'s terminology) to the ontological, existential structure of mineness that is present in Dasein generally; the second refers to the ontical, existentiell fact that each of us can refer to ourselves with 'me.' The fact one can describe mineness *qua* existential structure separately does not mean that such a structure exists separately in our world somewhere, even though the structural description is a more general, and in a sense more fundamental, level of description. Aristotle likewise declares that "The form has a better claim than the matter to be called nature" (*Physics* II.1), yet that doesn't mean that we find forms of plants, of rocks, of statues, and so on sitting out in the world. For a more relevant example, the meaning of Dasein's Being, according to *Being and Time*, is temporality. But this is not just an abstract fact: "Dasein 'is' its past in the way of *its* own Being, which, to put it roughly, 'historizes' out of its future on each occasion."[410] As a result, if Dasein inquires "into the meaning of existentiality itself . . . , then one cannot fail to see that the inquiry into Being (the ontico-ontological necessity of which we have already indicated)

[409] *Being and Time* 36.
[410] *Being and Time* 41.

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is itself characterized by historicality."[411] These are not mere facts, but facts about the nature of any investigation into Dasein's Being that Dasein, i.e., you and I, undertakes. Such investigation is and must be historical, because Dasein is temporal, and temporality manifests in every case as historicality (specifically, as the three equiprimordial ecstases of temporality, i.e., as historical Being-in-the-world), where this means concrete, actual history. The nature of Dasein's structures, and how those structures must manifest, drive the approach.

All the same, just as one can discuss the form of an existing plant for Aristotle, one can discuss existential structures on their own terms, as Heidegger does in *Being and Time*. At least for the first half. The second, unpublished half of the work was to be the destruction of the history of philosophy, in which Heidegger would discuss the Western philosophical tradition going back to Aristotle. That would be a concrete task, necessitated because "The question of the meaning of Being must be carried through by explicating Dasein beforehand in its temporality and historicality[, at which point] the question thus brings itself to the point where it understands itself as historiological."[412] One might ask what the necessity of such a historical study is, besides to show how previous philosophers were wrong. But as was just explained above, if Dasein *in fact* is historical when it exists, then the inquiry into the meaning of Being cannot ignore this fact; it must reckon with history, because Dasein's ways of Being, including that way which consists in inquiring into the meaning of Being, always are historical. "In working out the question of Being, we must heed this assignment, so that by positively making the past our own, we may bring ourselves into full possession of the ownmost possibilities of such inquiry."[413] This follows directly from Heidegger's understanding of what it is to be Dasein. Dasein exists, and existence is historical; to be historical is to be in a tradition, and authenticity can only happen

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[411] *Being and Time* 43.
[412] *Being and Time* 42.
[413] Ibid.

relative to an actual historical tradition. One must, therefore, reckon with one's tradition. The second half of *Being and Time* is a methodological necessity, driven by how authenticity and Dasein are understood.

There are two ways in which Being can be discussed, then—formally, in terms of existential structures, and concretely, in terms of Dasein's actual historical possibilities of existence. Heidegger means to speak to both, but *Being and Time* never accomplishes this, because it is unfinished. In fact, as intimated in Chapter 2's discussion of authentic history, Heidegger may not even have fully worked out the formal existential account of historicity by the time of *Being and Time*'s publication. Following the table of contents at the end of *Being and Time*'s introduction, it is the historical part of the work, Part Two, that is completely unwritten; most of Part One, the formal account, is there, and the formal discussion of history comes late there. As a result, *Being and Time* comes across as a formal work discussing abstract structures. It is said there that every Dasein has mineness, has a history, but these discussions are left at a formal level. The later works focus in large part on what would have been Part Two of *Being and Time*, the destruction of the history of philosophy. Heidegger does, it should be kept in mind, make structural points on occasion in his later work, as discussed from time to time in the course of this study (recall in particular the discussions of Heidegger's self-interpretations in Chapter 4, where he basically repeats his structural claims from earlier works); however, the overall focus is on concrete history. As a result, the two halves of *Being and Time* are spread not across one work, but across Heidegger's career—on the one hand, one has *Being and Time* as we have it, and on the other hand, one has the greater part of what comes after. Remember, as the years go on more and more of Heidegger's work is devoted to historical interpretation. The point is that this fact is not a fluke or a change of orientation; Heidegger always had such a project in mind.

The impression of two different Heideggers, then, even if the content persists over time, comes in no small part from the different approaches in the surviving part of *Being and Time* and the later works. The later works are focused on concrete historical matters, which the Introduction and discussion of authentic historicality in *Being and Time* hint at, but which the book itself does not ultimately undertake. This also explains why there can be a fundamental compatibility between early and late when the scope of discussion varies so greatly: the later work is, in many ways, a concrete filling out of the formal story given in *Being and Time*. In terms of authenticity in particular, authenticity can only be authentic with regards to a Situation, which is historical. Heidegger can give a formal story, as he does in *Being and Time* with regard to (for instance) idle talk. But the actual existence of idle talk only happens historically, in concrete ways. Hence, Heidegger's examples of idle talk are always historical ones such as newspapers and mass media, because what else could they be? Certainly the ancient Greeks and medieval Christians could have idle talk. But theirs happened in accord with those understandings of the world. Without a history in which to manifest in some way, idle talk *qua* structure of inauthenticity is an abstract concept, which is to say nothing at all. Authenticity only means something in the concrete, which means in the context of a tradition, a tradition that *Being and Time* sought to confront with the destruction of the history of ontology:

> this destruction is just as far from having the negative sense of shaking off the ontological tradition. We must, on the contrary, stake out the positive possibilities of that tradition, and this always means keeping it within its *limits*; these in turn are given factically in the way the question is formulated at the time, and in the way the possible field for investigation is thus bounded off.[414]

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[414] *Being and Time* 44.

On the one hand, the above passage sounds like an existential description of how Dasein must reckon with its history. On the other hand, it is in fact Heidegger's justification for why he must investigate the history of philosophy. Insofar as authenticity is our goal, we must undertake what is necessary to achieve authenticity. This means that the concrete investigation of history is every bit as necessary as the existential analytic; the results of the analytic itself demand it.

Occasionally, discussions in *Being and Time* itself even hint at something more. A single example: in discussing primitive Dasein Heidegger says, in one of those moments that desperately calls for explication, that "Perhaps even readiness-to-hand and equipment have nothing to contribute [*nichts auszurichten*] as ontological clues in Interpreting the primitive world; and certainly the ontology of Thinghood does even less." Yet this is not, as the next sentence implies, because primitive man is not Dasein: "But if an understanding of Being is constitutive for primitive Dasein and for the primitive world in general, then it is all the more urgent to work out the 'formal' idea of worldhood."[415] Working out the idea of worldhood, this passage says, is important because even primitive Dasein is Dasein, and understands Being, even though readiness-to-hand, taken so often to be an absolute and timeless existential structure for Heidegger, may not explain the primitive world. Whatever Heidegger has in mind here, he seems to think that Dasein is not merely the sum of the structures he is identifying in his investigation.

The fact that *Being and Time*, or rather what we have of it, weighs exclusively towards the formal part of the investigation, and that Heidegger's later work focuses almost entirely on the concrete aspect, creates the appearance of a difference where there is none. Yet so long as that difference appears, and has appeared, to be so clear and distinct, so long as everything looks so clearly different in content, approach, and orientation, so long as the shift is so visible, one can appreciate the view that there are two Heideggers; it is convincing. But is it persuasive? The

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[415] *Being and Time* 113.

earlier and the later work *are* different in an important respect, and that difference *is*, in a way, one of content. But that's because the subject matter of *Being and Time* is basically all formal, whereas the subject matter of the later work is concrete. Not only do these two not come in conflict with each other; the latter is the filling out, concretizing, giving life to the former. They complete each other.

5.2 AN INTRODUCTION TO *HEIDEGGER'S* KEHRE

But in that case, why didn't Heidegger just finish *Being and Time*? Why did he abandon the project? Is all of his later work just what he meant to do anyway? No, it is not. To finish, I will give a sketch, a suggestion, as to what the shift in the discussion of authenticity, and what the *Kehre* more broadly, represents.

In discussions of the *Kehre*, much is often made of the passage in "Letter on 'Humanism'" where Heidegger speaks of the third division of Part One of *Being and Time*, which was to be titled "Time and Being." "Here," Heidegger says, "everything is reversed. The division in question was held back because thinking failed in the adequate saying of this turning [*Kehre*] and did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics."[416] "Time and Being," and with it *Being and Time*, was not sufficient for Heidegger's aims, and perhaps that because it was still trapped within the metaphysical perspective. Braver quoting this passage, says that, "Although Heidegger intended to throw off the subjectivism of the first two divisions in the third, he found that he could not do so because the work as a whole was too deeply structured around the Kantian subject."[417] Leaving aside the particulars of Braver's interpretation, in what

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[416] *Pathmarks* 251.
[417] Braver 279.

sense could the unpublished part of *Being and Time* be trapped in the metaphysical perspective, if I am right that it maintains the same basic positions as the later work?

The answer is that there is a second way to read this passage, one that follows more closely to the actual wording of the passage and explains the ultimate consistency of Heidegger's views alongside the degree of change in his approach. "Time and Being" "did not succeed with the help of the language of metaphysics," but that does not imply that the division was trapped in metaphysical *presuppositions*. In fact, in *Mindfulness* Heidegger seems to think otherwise: "For the inadequacy of the withheld section on "Time and Being" was not because of an uncertainty concerning the direction of the inquiry and its domain."[418] "Time and Being" did not fail because of its basic direction, which would be how it failed if it were following a path carved out by metaphysical presuppositions. Instead, it failed "because of an uncertainty that only concerned the appropriate elaboration."[419] "Time and Being" couldn't be worded properly.

The *Kehre*, insofar as the premature ending of *Being and Time* plays a role, is a matter of form rather than content. Or better: style rather than substance. *Being and Time*, I have argued, maintains the same basic views as the later work, at least when it comes to authenticity and inauthenticity, which is not a small issue. Heidegger's claims in the above passages are broader, however, and go to the heart of what the *Kehre* is supposed to be. I do not maintain that Heidegger changed nothing whatsoever, that he kept to every statement, factual or otherwise, maintained in *Being and Time*. I have argued in these pages, for instance, that his conception of authentic historicity in *Being and Time* was poorly worked out and received a more sufficient elaboration later on, and I do not think that that's the only thing that changed. But that is not the strong *Kehre* thesis, anyway; the strong *Kehre* thesis argues that the shift is of something

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[418] *Mindfulness* 367.
[419] Ibid.

fundamental, a reversal of some basic, essential position that Heidegger had maintained. Were that the case, elaboration alone would not be the issue keeping back "Time and Being."

On the other hand, elaboration is no small matter for Heidegger, a point that needs to be driven in. Even in *Being and Time*, as he concludes the Introduction to the work, Heidegger notes that "it is one thing to give a report in which we tell about entities, but another to grasp entities in their Being. For the latter task we lack not only most of the words but, above all, the 'grammar'."[420] As Heidegger himself will repeat throughout his career, language has a fundamental relation to how we grasp Being; "Language is the precinct (*templum*), that is, the house of Being."[421] One cannot approach the topic of Being with language suited for describing beings, meaning that one cannot discuss Being using the standard metaphysical approaches: "The necessitating for asking the question of being in a different way cannot be awakened and aroused out of, and through, metaphysics."[422] A drastic change in approach is therefore needed. On the other hand, following what has been said so often, one cannot simply invent an all-new way to describe Being. One must work through and confront one's history, as that history is definitive for one's possibilities. One cannot ignore or try to go around metaphysics, because metaphysics is the fundamental experience that shapes our understanding of Being:

> *Sein und Zeit*, which can only be *one* exigent pathway among other possible pathways, *must* unavoidably look like "metaphysics" and "anthropology", nay it has to make itself initially "understandable" with the help of "metaphysics" and "anthropology" by going through them, which means that *Sein und Zeit* has to reckon with all possible and proximate misunderstandings. And yet, all this leads nowhere and is not sustaining.[423]

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[420] *Being and Time* 63.
[421] Heidegger, Martin. "What are Poets For?" in *Poetry Language Thought* 129.
[422] *Mindfulness* 300.
[423] *Mindfulness* 125.

On the one hand, Heidegger argues that he must go through the traditional metaphysical perspectives. On the other hand, in the very same passage he says that it "leads nowhere and is not sustaining." Is there a way to resolve this tension?

There may be, if one asks whether *Being and Time* achieves its goal of moving beyond metaphysics by moving through it. Years later, in *The Principle of Reason*, Heidegger goes out of his way to make a correction to one of his previous essays. In describing the error that necessitates the correction, Heidegger goes beyond merely admitting a factual mistake, and his words get to the heart of what Heidegger aims to accomplish, something that may show how *Being and Time* ultimately failed, in his view:

> Sometimes we see and clearly have before our eyes a state of affairs. Nevertheless, we do not bring into view what is most obvious in what lies present before us. Seeing something and expressly bringing into view what is seen are not the same thing. Here, bringing into view [*er-blicken*] means to see into [*ein-blicken*] that which genuinely looks [*anblickt*] at us from out of what is seen—which means, what looks at us in terms of what is most proper to it. We see a great deal and bring into view very little. Even when we have brought into view what is seen, seldom are we capable of sustaining the aspect [*Anblick*] of what is brought into view and of holding in view what is brought into view. A constantly renewed, that is, more and more original appropriation is needed in order for mortals to have a true beholding of something.[424]

Heidegger does have theoretical views that can be elaborated; their elaboration constitutes Part One of *Being and Time*. But what is talked about there cannot simply be described in an ordinary fashion, and this as a matter of method: what is to be discussed must be approached such that the thing inquired into reveals itself—'bringing into view' requires a specific sort of encounter, one that grasps the thing in line with mindfulness or essential thinking. This is an imperative for Heidegger's own work just as much as it is for the authentic person Heidegger is describing.

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[424] *The Principle of Reason* 46.

Thus, while there must be an encounter with history, there must also be a great deal of caution with regards to how that encounter happens. Given Heidegger's discussions in *Mindfulness*, it would appear that *Being and Time* had the right idea, both in terms of its content and its approach, but did not go far enough. It was still trapped in metaphysical language, even though "what this work strives for is often enough *said* in what is communicated."[425] The elaboration was insufficient, even though it developed an entirely new terminology and approach. In short, *Being and Time*'s methodology was insufficiently radical.

The works of the 1930s and beyond move more and more drastically away, stylistically speaking, from both *Being and Time* and philosophy as a whole. Of the lectures in the 1930s, Heidegger says that "These "approaches" do not intend to "complete" *Sein und Zeit*. Rather, they hold fast more originarily on the entire inquiry and shift this inquiry into the proper perspective."[426] The lectures do not add something not present before, but shift the presentation. The path forward must be free of metaphysics, including its language, and yet must also force an encounter with the history of metaphysics, insofar as it is the history of those very people whom Heidegger is addressing. An appropriate approach to the investigation of Being must be a historically centered discussion of the history of metaphysics, but one that lets the guiding questions and perspectives be seen as they are in themselves, via "A constantly renewed, that is, more and more original appropriation," as Heidegger says in *The Principle of Reason*. An engagement with the history of metaphysics remains essential to becoming authentic in the contemporary age, necessary because "We must . . . stake out the positive possibilities of that tradition,"[427] and that in virtue of the theoretical positions Heidegger takes. The one necessitates

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[425] *Mindfulness* 367.
[426] *Mindfulness* 374.
[427] *Being and Time* 44.

the other; Heidegger's own position, he thinks, requires a more drastic shift in approach than *Being and Time* presents, and the later work is his attempt to carry that out.

In his letter to Father Richardson, Heidegger refers to the preface to the seventh edition of *Being and Time*, where he says that "the road [Part One of *Being and Time*] has taken remains even today a necessary one, if our Dasein is to be stirred by the question of Being."[428] This is not just a general note for a preface, but an important claim about the nature of Heidegger's work. One must start from the tradition, acknowledge it, discover its sources, and by steps challenge its dominion if one is to see the true possibilities that that same tradition offers; this is Heidegger's position. *Being and Time* presents a view of authenticity that persists until Heidegger's final years, and based on Heidegger's own words I suspect that the same can be said for most of his other substantive views as well. But the approach has changed drastically. In part, that may be because *Being and Time* was insufficient to break the grip of traditional metaphysical concepts and understandings. But in part, that is also because one cannot start wholly anew. The very view to be argued for says this. To be authentic means being authentic about the world one is in. And so, as quoted at the opening to this study, "only by way of what [Heidegger] I has thought [in *Being and Time*] does one gain access to what is to-be-thought by [Heidegger] II."[429] But that account cannot settle for being only a formal account, one view among others; the goal is an entirely different orientation, one that will inform a new grasp of the tradition and with it a new direction. And so "the thought of [Heidegger] I becomes possible only if it is contained in [the perspective opened up by] [Heidegger] II."[430] Heidegger II must make the reader see, and doing

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[428] *Being and Time* 17.
[429] Richardson xxii.
[430] Ibid.

so requires something entirely different from what metaphysics and Western history have made

possible, a new way in which to approach the world man lives in. Authenticity demands it.

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